

# English for Social Interaction

# SOCIAL EXPRESSIONS

Betty Kirkpatrick MA

- Thirty realistic and lively passages dealing with everyday situations
- Each passage containing expressions frequently found in everyday conversation
- Clear explanations of useful expressions, lots of example sentences and Language Help notes
- Exercises for self-testing with answer key

English for  
Social Interaction

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Betty Kirkpatrick MA



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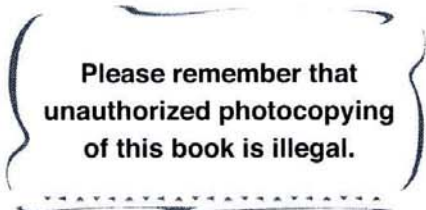
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# Introduction

Learners usually find that it is more difficult to master spoken English than written English. Yet it is important that they do acquire a skill in spoken English so that they can engage in fluent communication. This, ultimately, is the goal of learning a language.

This book is intended to aid the acquisition of such a skill and the achieving of such a goal. It presents a series of 30 passages that each deal with a situation which is commonly found in the course of everyday life. For example, the passage may be about shopping or going out for a meal, visiting the doctor, making telephone calls, making appointments, saying thank you, paying compliments, issuing invitations, expressing intentions, stating likes and dislikes, and so on.

Each of the passages contains the expressions, printed in bold type, which are most commonly associated with the particular situation and which learners need to know in order to be able to cope with the situation. The passages have all been specially written and are both lively and realistic.

Immediately following each passage is an explanation section. This section defines or explains each of the expressions given in bold type in the passage. It also gives two example sentences, printed in italic type, to give students more usage guidance. Where relevant, further language help has been given. This additional help might, for example, take the form of another expression which is used in a similar way or take the form of an equivalent American English expression.

A set of exercises, with accompanying answers, has also been included in the book so that students can test their comprehension of the key expressions and their explanations.

# 1

## Telephoning

*Pam had a few telephone calls to make one morning.*

First of all, she dialled her lawyer's number and the receptionist replied, saying, '**Good morning.** Miller and Clark Solicitors. **How may I help you?**'

Pam said, 'Good morning. **I'd like to speak to** Mr Clark, please. It's Mrs Jenkins speaking.'

'**I'll put you through,**' said the receptionist, but a few minutes later she said, '**I'm sorry,** Mr Clark is not available just now. He's in a meeting. **Can I take a message?**'

'No, thank you. I need to speak to him personally. **I'll call back,**' said Pam. 'When will he be free?'

'I really can't say, Mrs Jenkins,' said the receptionist. 'I know that he has meetings with clients all morning.'

'**I'll ring back** just after lunch and hope to be able to speak to him then,' said Pam.

'Very well, Mrs Jenkins,' said the receptionist, '**Goodbye.**'

Next, Pam tried ringing her accountant.

'If you'll hold on, Mrs Jenkins, I'll see if Ms Scott is free,' said the receptionist. After a short pause, she said, 'No, I'm sorry, Ms Scott is away from her desk at the moment. Can I take a message or perhaps Ms Scott could **call you back?**'

'Yes, please ask her to call me back as soon as possible,' said Pam. 'I'll be in my office all afternoon. Thank you.'

Pam's next call was to a department store. '**Hello,**' she said. '**Could I speak to** someone in customer services, please?'

'I'm sorry, **the line is engaged** just now. I'm afraid I'll have to put you on hold,' said the telephonist.

After what seemed like a long time Pam gave up and replaced the receiver.

Then Pam called her mother. '668 2503' was the reply.

'Hello, Mum,' said Pam. 'I'm just ringing to say that I'll be home late tonight and so don't bother to cook dinner. I'll see you tonight.'

Pam's last call was to her friend Amy, but she got a message from her answering machine. 'This is Amy speaking. I'm sorry I'm not available to take your call right now, but if you leave a message and your name and number after the tone I'll get back to you as soon as possible.'

Pam said, 'Hi, Amy. It's Pam here. I'm just ringing to confirm lunch on Tuesday. Look forward to seeing you.'

## Useful Expressions

### call

#### call (someone) back

You **call** (someone) **back** when you have been out or unavailable when they have called you and you are phoning them, perhaps to find out what they wanted:

- James is in a meeting just now. He says that he'll **call you back** this afternoon.
- I'm in the middle of a meeting just now. I'll **call you back** as soon as I can.

#### Language Help

You can use **get back to** (someone) in the same way, although it is slightly more informal:

- Your husband's in a meeting just now. He'll **get back to you** as soon as it finishes.
- I don't know if I'm free for lunch on Friday. I'll check my diary and **get back to you** right away.

#### I'll call back

You say **I'll call back** when you are going to phone someone later, often because you have been unable to speak to the person or have been unable to get the information you want.

You use **I'll ring back** in the same way:

- 'Mrs Blair is in a meeting just now, I'm afraid.'  
'Thank you. **I'll call back.**'
- 'It will be tomorrow before we have the results of your blood tests.'  
'Thank you. **I'll ring back.**'

### engage

#### the line is engaged

You say **the line is engaged** when someone else is already using the telephone line that someone wants to use.

You can also use **the line is busy** in the same way:

- I'm sorry I can't put you through to Mr Brown just now. **The line is engaged.**
- **The line is busy.** Would you like to hold or call back later?

### goodbye

You say **goodbye** at the end of a telephone call:

- I'll certainly give your message to Mr Smith. **Goodbye.**
- I must go now. **Goodbye!**



### Language Help

If it is an informal call you might say **bye** or **bye-bye** instead of **goodbye** as these are both informal forms of **goodbye**:

- *It's been good chatting to you again, but I really must go. **Bye!***
- *Have a nice tenth birthday, Lucy. **Bye-bye!***

## good morning/good afternoon

You say **good morning** or **good afternoon** depending on the time of day, instead of **hello**, when you are answering a formal business call, usually when you are working for a firm. It is common also to give the name of the firm and sometimes the nature of their business:

- **Good morning.** Jones and Blair.
- **Good afternoon.** Learners Publishing.

## hello

You say **hello** when you answer the phone. You can use it on its own or you can say **hello! ... speaking**. Some people simply say their telephone number when answering the phone.

You also say **hello** to the person who answers the phone when you are making a phone call:

- **'Hello!'**  
*'Hello! Could I speak to Mary, please?'*
- **'Hello! Anne Black speaking.'**  
*'Hello, Anne! It's Jean.'*
- **'8447 6391.'**  
*'Hello, Dad. It's Mike.'*

### Language Help

In more formal business calls it is more common to say **good morning** or **good afternoon**, depending on the time of day.

## help

### how may I help you?

You use **how may I help you?** in a formal context, usually when you are answering business calls when you are working for a firm:

- *Good morning! Wilson and Jones. **How may I help you?***
- *Good afternoon! Jackson and White, dental surgeons. **How may I help you?***

## here

### it's ... here

You say **it's ... here** when you are telling someone at the other end of a phone line who you are:

- *Hello! **It's Jack here.***
- *Hello! **It's the deputy manager here.***

You can also use **it's ... speaking** or **this is ... speaking** in the same way:

- *Hello! **It's Jane speaking.***
- *Hello! **This is Lucy speaking.***

### Language Help

You can omit the **it's** or the **this is** from the above expressions:

- *Hello! Mr Martin **here.***
- *Hello! Lucy **speaking.***

## message

### can I take a message?

You use **can I take a message?** when you answer the phone to someone who wishes to speak to someone who is not there or who is not free to take the call.

You can also say **can I give a message to ...?:**

- *I'm sorry. Mr Smith is on holiday this week. **Can I take a message?***
- *I'm sorry. John won't be in the office till tomorrow. **Can I give him a message?***

## sorry

### I'm sorry

You say **I'm sorry** when you are telling someone that they cannot speak to the person whom they have asked for on the phone, usually because the person is not there or is not free to take the call:

- **I'm sorry.** Mr Smith is not in the office today.
- **I'm sorry.** Mrs Jones is with a client just now.

## speak

### could I speak to ...?

You say **could I speak to ...?** when you make a phone call to someone and someone else answers the phone.

You can also use **I'd like to speak to ...** in the same way:

- **Could I speak to** Lucy, please?
- **I'd like to speak to** the managing editor, please.

## Language Help

The expression **may I speak to ...?** is used in the same way but it is slightly more formal. It is also possible to use just the person's name:

- **May I speak to** the managing director, please?
- **John Smith**, please.

## through

### I'll put you through

You say **I'll put you through** when you are trying to connect someone making a call with the person whom they want to speak to. This is most commonly used by those employed to operate a switchboard:

- Mr Jones seems to be free now. **I'll put you through.**
- Mr Jackson is on holiday this week. **I'll put you through** to his secretary.

## Exercise 1

Answer the following questions.

- A** Write down a more formal way of saying each expression and use it in a sentence.

1 *Could I speak to ...?*

---

---

2 *Bye!*

---

---

- B** Insert the word missing from each expression below.

1 *Good morning! Wilson and Jackson. **How may I** \_\_\_\_\_ **you?***

2 *Miss Brown has just finished her other call. **I'll** \_\_\_\_\_ **you through.***

3 *Mr Wilson is away at a conference today. **Can I take a** \_\_\_\_\_ **?***

- C** What expression do you use in each of these situations?

1 The person you want to speak to is not available and you intend to phone him or her again later.

---

2 You are about to tell the person on the phone that the person he or she wants to speak to is not there or cannot come to the phone.

---

3 You answer a formal business call and it's after midday.

---

- D** Give another form of **the line is engaged**.

---



## 2

## Saying goodbye

*Jill and Bob had been having a large informal dinner party for several of their friends. Everyone had enjoyed the evening very much, but it was getting rather late and people were starting to think about going home.*

Sara was the first to go. 'Sorry to break up the party, but I've really got to go and get some sleep. I've got to catch the early train to work tomorrow morning. Thanks for a lovely evening, Jill and Bob! **Goodbye**, everybody!'

Bill and Anne got up just as Sara was going out of the door. Anne said to their hosts, 'Thank you for a wonderful evening, but I'm afraid **it's time for us to go** as well. My mum's looking after the children and she likes to go to bed reasonably early.' Then she and Bill called, '**Bye**, everyone!'

Mary then got to her feet, saying, '**I must go**, too. I need to be up early to finish some work. Thanks for a very pleasant evening. **Bye-bye**, all! I'll **see you soon**.'

'Wait a minute, Mary,' said Frank. 'I'll come with you. We can walk home together.' Turning to Jill and Bob, he said, 'It's been a great evening. Thanks a lot!' Then he went off with Mary, saying to the remaining guests, '**See you**!'

By this time Jane had stood up and was saying to Jill and Bob, 'I must go if I'm going to get the last bus. Thanks a lot! I've had a really nice time.' Then she waved goodbye to the rest, saying, '**Cheerio**, all!'

Sue and Jack had a babysitter looking after their children and so they had to leave also. 'Bye, all!' said Sue after she had thanked their hosts. '**See you later**, everybody!' said Jack.

Joe left at the same time as them. '**So long**!' he said. 'Thanks a lot!'

That left only Lucy and Mike. They had another cup of coffee and chatted for some time with Jill and Bob before Lucy said, '**It's getting late**. We should call for a taxi.' When the taxi arrived Lucy and Mike thanked their hosts and left, saying, '**Good night**! You must come to dinner with us soon.'

'See you soon!' called Lucy, while Mike called, 'Good night!'

## Useful Expressions

### bye

You use **bye** as an informal form of **goodbye**, usually to people whom you know well:

- **Bye**, Mum! I'm just off to work.
- **Bye**, kids! Be good!

**Bye-bye** is used in the same way as **bye**, although it is less common:

- **Bye-bye!** Have a good time at the beach!
- **Bye-bye!** I'll see you soon.

### cheerio

You use **cheerio** as a common informal alternative to **goodbye** in British English. You can use **cheers** in the same way, although this is less common, even more informal and mostly used by young people:

- Here's my bus. **Cheerio!**
- **Cheerio!** Drive carefully!
- I'll have to go now or I won't be home before 11 o'clock and my dad will be furious. **Cheers!**

### go

#### I must go

You say **I must go** when you are about to leave somewhere or someone:

- I've enjoyed meeting you again very much, but **I really must go**.
- It's been a wonderful party, but **I must go** now.

### goodbye

You say **goodbye** when you leave someone or when they leave you. You can be going away for a short time, a long time or forever:

- **Goodbye!** Enjoy your year in Australia!
- **Goodbye!** See you tomorrow!

- **Goodbye!** I don't suppose we will meet again.

#### Language Help

The expression **farewell** is no longer commonly used as a greeting, being much more formal than **goodbye** and rather literary. **Farewell** is, however, still used in such contexts as a **farewell party**.

You also say **goodbye** at the end of a telephone call.

### good night

You say **good night** sometimes instead of **goodbye** when it is late in the evening and you are leaving someone or leaving a social gathering. You also say it to someone when they are going to bed:

- Thanks for a very enjoyable evening. **Good night!**
- **Good night!** It was a wonderful party!
- Are you off to bed? **Good night!** Sleep well!

### late

#### it's getting late

You use **it's getting late** at some kind of occasion held in the evening when you are thinking of leaving:

- **It's getting late.** We'd better be off soon.
- **It's getting late.** We really have to go.

### later

#### see you later

You use **see you later** as an informal way of saying **goodbye**, usually to someone whom you meet quite often and are likely to see again quite soon. However, the expression is

also commonly used by people in shops, such as hairdressers, when the person using it might never see the other person again:

- *I must go home now, Mary. Dinner will be ready soon. **See you later!***
- *Thank you, Mrs Smith. I hope you like your new hairstyle. **See you later!***

## long so long

You can use **so long** instead of **goodbye** in informal contexts, but it is much less common than **bye**, **bye-bye** or **cheerio** and has become rather dated:

- *'**So long**, children!' said Uncle Ben as he boarded the ship. 'I'll see you some time next year.'*
- ***So long!** We may see you next summer!*

## see see you

You use **see you** as an informal way of saying **goodbye**, usually to someone whom you meet quite often and are likely to see again quite soon:

- *I'm going home now, Tom. **See you!***
- *I must run to catch the bus. **See you!***

## soon see you soon

You use **see you soon** as an informal way of saying **goodbye**, usually to someone whom you meet quite often and are likely to see again quite soon:

- *That was a lovely evening. **See you soon!***
- *Thanks for lunch. **See you soon!***

## sorry sorry to break up the party

You use **sorry to break up the party** when you are the first to leave a social gathering of some kind:

- ***Sorry to break up the party**, but we promised our babysitter we'd be home before midnight.*
- ***Sorry to break up the party**, but I have to catch the 11 o'clock bus.*

## time it's time for us to go

You use **it's time for us to go** at some kind of occasion held in the evening when you are about to go:

- *It's after midnight. **It's time for us to go.***
- ***It's time for us to go.** We both have to work in the morning.*



## Exercise 2

Answer the following questions.

**A** Insert the word missing from each expression below.

1 I didn't realize it was so late. **It's time for me to** \_\_\_\_\_.

2 Sorry to \_\_\_\_\_ **up the party**.

3 I \_\_\_\_\_ **go** or I'll miss the last bus.

4 So \_\_\_\_\_! Have a safe journey.

5 **It's getting** \_\_\_\_\_. We should go home.

**B** You say **good night** to someone when they are going to bed. In what other situation would you use it?

---

---

**C** Write down two informal expressions meaning **goodbye** which you would be most likely to use to someone whom you know quite well and see quite often.

---

---

**D** Write down a common informal expression in British English which means **goodbye**.

---

## 3

## Making introductions

*Meg worked in the publicity department at one of the branch offices of Safe and Secure, a large insurance company. She was on her way to spend two weeks in the head office in the city to do some extra training.*

When Meg arrived at the head office she went to the reception desk and said, 'Good morning. **My name is** Meg Wilson. I'm from the Blackford branch of the firm and I'm here to do some training. Mr Black is expecting me.' Mr Black was head of publicity.

'Good morning, Meg,' said the receptionist. 'I'll just let Mr Black know you're here.'

After a few minutes a young woman came to the reception, saying, 'Good morning! You must be Meg Wilson. **I'm** Sara Smith and I'm Mr Black's secretary. Welcome to head office.'

'Thank you!' said Meg. 'I'm really looking forward to working here.'

Sara led Meg upstairs to Mr Black's office. 'Mr Black, **this is** Meg Wilson from our Blackford office,' she said.

**How do you do**, Meg?' said Mr Black, shaking hands with her. 'I hope you will enjoy your visit to head office.'

'How do you do, Mr Black?' replied Meg. 'I'm sure I will.'

'We'll start by getting Sara to introduce you to some of the other people you'll be working with,' said Mr Black.

First Meg met some members of the publicity department who were together having a planning meeting.

'Good morning, everyone!' said Sara. **I'd like to introduce** Meg Wilson. She's from the Blackford office and she's going to be working with us for a couple of weeks. I think Mr Black told you about her.'

Jim, who was Mr Black's senior assistant, got up and shook hands with Meg. 'Hello, Meg! **Pleased to meet you!** I hope you enjoy your time here!'

'Hi, Meg!' said Mike. **Nice to meet you!**

'Hi, Meg!' said Mary. 'Good to meet you. Let me know if I can do anything to help.'

By the time she had met all of the publicity department Meg felt very confused. 'I'll never remember any of their names,' she said.

They decided to take a break and Sara went off to make some coffee before continuing with the introductions.

## Useful Expressions

### how

#### how do you do?

You say **how do you do?** as a formal way of responding when you are introduced to someone:

- 'Mr Brown, I'd like to introduce you to Miss Jones, who's to be in charge of publicity.'  
'How do you do, Miss Jones?'  
'How do you do, Mr Brown?'

#### Language Help

Please note that you do not reply to the question **how do you do?** It is simply a conventional greeting requiring no answer and should not be treated like such expressions as **how are you?**

### I'm ...

You use **I'm ...** or **I am ...** when you are telling someone or some people who you are, often adding some other information, such as what you do:

- Hello, everyone! **I'm** Meg. I've just moved here from Barchester.
- Good morning, children! **I am** Miss Brown and I am going to be your teacher for this term.

#### Language Help

You also use **my name is ...** in the same way:

- **My name is** Jack. I'm the new hotel porter.
- **My name is** Frank Brown. I'm here to help you with the garden.

### introduce

#### I'd like to introduce ...

You use **I'd like to introduce ...** in a fairly formal context when people are meeting each other for the first time and you are saying what the name of one of them is:

- Father, **I'd like to introduce** you to George Burns. He is my new business partner.
- Mr Jackson, **I'd like to introduce** you to the new department secretary, Miss Lee.

#### Language Help

You can also say **may I introduce ...**, **let me introduce ...** and **allow me to introduce ...** in the same rather formal way:

- Grandfather, **may I introduce** you to Jim Wilson, who is one of my fellow teachers.
- Mr Wilson, **let me introduce** Mrs Smith, who is our new biology teacher.



## pleased

### pleased to meet you

You use **pleased to meet you** as a rather informal conventional response to being introduced to someone. Formerly, the expression was considered not very acceptable, and even rather vulgar, but social manners have changed and it is now considered quite acceptable. It is much less formal than **how do you do?**.

There are various alternative forms of this expression including **good to meet you** and **nice to meet you**:

- *'This is Jean Smith, our new flatmate.'*  
**'Nice to meet you, Jean!'**
- *'This is John Black, everyone. He is one of our new salesmen.'*  
**'Good to meet you!'**

## this

### this is ...

You use **this is ...** as a less formal way of saying **I'd like to introduce ...** with the same meaning:

- *Jane, **this is** James, my friend from university.*
- *Peter, **this is** Lucy. She's staying with me for a few days.*

#### Language Help

Sometimes people use **meet ...** as an informal introduction instead of **this is ...**:

- *Jack, **meet** Lucy.*

Also, some people simply use the names of the two people being introduced:

- *Meg, Bob. Bob, Meg.*

### Exercise 3

Answer the following questions.

**A** In what situation would you be likely to say, 'Bill, Tom. Tom, Bill'?

---

**B** You say **I'm ...** when you introduce yourself. What might you say instead?

---

**C** Write down a formal way of responding to being introduced to someone and show how the expression is used.

---

**D** Write down two rather formal equivalents of **this is ...** which you may use when you are introducing someone.

---

**E** You can say **pleased to meet you** as a rather informal conventional response when you are introduced to someone. Write down two other expressions that you might use in similar circumstances and use one of them in a sentence.

---

**F** Insert the word missing from each expression below.

1 'Mr Wilson, *this is Liz Brown, our new receptionist.*'

'\_\_\_\_\_ **do you do**, Miss Brown?'

2 Mrs White, *I'd like to* \_\_\_\_\_ *our new neighbour. She's just moved in.*

3 Jane, \_\_\_\_\_ Bob. *He's just come to live in the area.*

## 4

## Expressing anxiety

*When Sara came home from work, she found her mother in an agitated state.*

**What's wrong**, Mum?' asked Sara. 'You seem **upset**.'

'It's Jill. She's not home yet—and she should have been here an hour ago.' Jill was Sara's younger sister.

**Don't worry**, Mum! It's not all that late and she's probably not realized what time it is. I'm sure she'll be here soon. I'll make you some tea.'

Just then Sara's brother Peter came into the kitchen, saying, **What's up?** Mum's on the phone and she looks as though she's been crying.'

'It's Jill,' Sara replied. 'She should have been home by now and Mum's getting **anxious**.'

Peter went to find his mother, saying, **Try not to worry**, Mum! She'll be with her friends. You know what teenage girls are like. **I'm sure she's all right**.'

'I can't help but be **concerned**. I've just rung Lucy's mother and Lucy said that Jill left her outside the cinema ages ago to get the bus home.'

'Well, the bus service isn't very frequent in the evenings—and it's not very reliable,' said Peter. 'Perhaps she missed one and is waiting for another. Have you tried phoning her on her mobile?'

'Yes, but there's no reply,' said his mother. 'That has made me even more worried.'

**Calm down**, Mum! You'll make yourself ill. Perhaps she switched it off in the cinema and forgot to switch it back on again. Or it may need to be charged.'

Then Jill's father arrived home. **What's the matter**, love?' he said to his wife. 'You look terrible.'

'I think that **something must have happened** to Jill,' she replied. 'She's not home yet. What are we going to do? Do you think we should call the police?'

'It's too soon to do that,' said her husband. **Don't panic!** Jill's probably perfectly all right.'

Just then they heard the front door open. It was Jill, and she had a simple explanation. The bus had broken down and she couldn't phone because her mobile needed to be charged.



'I thought the safest thing to do was to just sit in the bus and wait for the replacement one to turn up. I didn't mean to worry you, Mum.'

But she had!

## Useful Expressions

### all right

**I'm sure she's, he's, everything's, etc, all right**

You use expressions like this to comfort someone when they are worried that something bad or unpleasant may happen or has happened, even though you do not yet know whether anything has happened or not:

- Try not to be so anxious. **I'm sure everything's all right.**
- Most probably your son has gone to play at a friend's house. **I'm sure he's all right.**

#### Language Help

**I'm sure she's, he's, everything's, etc, OK** is another expression that is used in similar circumstances:

- Don't worry, Jane. **I'm sure your daughter's OK.** She's probably gone to see a friend.

### anxious

You say that someone is **anxious** when they are worried that something bad or unpleasant may happen or has happened:

- 'Bill seems very **anxious**.'  
'He's waiting for his exam results and he thinks he did badly in his English exam.'
- The Smith family's cat has gone missing and their little girl is very **anxious** about it.

### calm

**calm down!**

You say **calm down!** to someone to try to get them to be less upset, angry or excited and so be able to think clearly and act sensibly:

- **Calm down, Sue!** I know there's been an accident on the motorway and your husband's driving home just now, but there are hundreds of people driving on the motorway.
- **Calm down, Dad!** The damage to your car is very slight.

### concerned

You say that someone is **concerned** when they are worried:

- Meg's **concerned** because her son hasn't been in touch for some time. He's working as an aid worker in Africa and she can't contact him.
- Jim's very **concerned** about his wife's health. She hasn't been well for some time.

#### Language Help

**Concerned** can also mean involved or interested in something:

- Meg used to be a member of the tennis club but she's no longer **concerned** with it.
- Frank's father used to be **concerned** with the Scout movement.

## happen

### something must have happened

You say **something must have happened** when you are worried in case something bad, such as an accident, has happened:

- *Jill would never forget that we were having lunch together. **Something must have happened.***
- *The children should have been home an hour ago. I'm worried. **Something must have happened.***

## matter

### what's the matter?

You use **what's the matter?** in the same way that you use **what's wrong?**:

- ***What's the matter, Jane?** Are you worried about something?*
- ***What's the matter, Mike?** You look ill.*

You use **what's the matter with ...?** in the same way that you use **what's wrong with ...?**

- ***What's the matter with Sue this morning?** She looks miserable.*
- ***What's the matter with John?** He seems very tense.*

#### Language Help

You can also use **what's the matter with ...?** to ask what the problem is with something, or why it is not working, in the same way that you can use **what's wrong with ...?**:

- ***What's the matter with the phone?** I can't get a dialling tone.*
- ***What's the matter with the oven?** These cakes aren't ready yet and they've been in for ages.*

#### Language Help

If you say **something is the matter** or **something is the matter with ...** you mean that someone is unhappy or worried or that

something is causing a problem or is not working:

- ***Something is the matter.** All the children look frightened.*
- *I'm sure that **something is the matter.** Jim isn't answering his phone.*
- ***Something is the matter with Mary.** She looks very pale.*

## panic

### don't panic!

You use **don't panic!** to someone when they are very upset or anxious to try to get them to think clearly or behave sensibly:

- ***Don't panic!** The water's coming from your washing machine. Go and switch off the water!*
- ***Don't panic!** Your little girl's injury is very minor.*

## up

### what's up?

You use **what's up?** in the same way that you use **what's wrong?** except that it is more informal:

- ***What's up, Lucy?** Why are you crying?*
- ***What's up, Jack?** Are you worried about something?*

You use **what's up with ...?** in the same way that you use **what's wrong with ...?** except that it is more informal:

- ***What's up with Frank?** He looks ill.*
- ***What's up with Anne?** She ran from the room weeping.*

#### Language Help

You can also use **what's up with ...?** to ask what the problem is with something or why it is not working in the same way that you can use **what's wrong with ...?**:

- ***What's up with the washing machine?***
- ***What's up with the bus service today?***



### Language Help

If you say **something is up** or **something is up with ...** you mean that someone is unhappy or worried or that something is causing a problem or is not working. The expression is used in informal contexts:

- I knew **something was up**. Jim has not looked well for some time and now we've heard that he has to have heart surgery.
- The managers are having a meeting. I think **something's up**.
- **Something is up with Anne**. She looks as if she's in pain.

### upset

Someone is **upset** if they are unhappy because something bad or unpleasant has happened:

- Anna's **upset** because her dog died in a car accident.
- Jean's very **upset** because her holiday's been cancelled.

### worry

#### don't worry!

You say **don't worry!** to someone to try to make them less worried or anxious. It is often used by people who do not yet know whether there is anything to be worried about or not. They just want to comfort the person who is worried.

You use the expression **try not to worry!** in the same way:

- **Don't worry, Sue!** I'm sure your dog will soon come back.
- **Don't worry, Jim!** Mary may well not have been on the train which crashed.
- **Try not to worry, Mum!** Dad often forgets to ring when he's going to be late. I'm sure he'll be all right.
- **Try not to worry!** The floodwater may be rising, but your house is built on a hill.

### Language Help

You can also use **don't worry!** to say that something's not important or doesn't matter:

- 'I forgot to bring your book back.'  
**'Don't worry! I don't need it today.'**
- 'I'm sorry I spilt coffee on your newspaper.'  
**'Don't worry! I had finished with the paper, anyhow.'**

### wrong

#### what's wrong?

You use **what's wrong?** to find out why someone is unhappy, worried, ill, etc:

- **What's wrong, Meg?** You look as though you've been crying.
- **What's wrong, Jim?** You seem very anxious.

You say **what's wrong with ...?** when you are asking someone else why someone is unhappy, worried, ill, etc.

- **What's wrong with Sue?** She looks very pale.
- **What's wrong with Frank?** He seems miserable.

### Language Help

You can also use **what's wrong?** or **what's wrong with ...?** to ask what the problem is with something or why it is not working:

- **What's wrong with the car?**
- **What's wrong with the computer system today?**

### Language Help

If you say **something is wrong** or **something is wrong with ...** you mean that someone is unhappy or worried or that something is causing a problem or is not working:

- **Something is wrong.** Sue is weeping in the kitchen.
- **Something is wrong.** The car is making a banging noise.
- **Something is wrong with the water system.**



## Exercise 4

Answer the following questions.

- A** What other expressions in the passage mean the same as **what's wrong**?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- B** You can use **don't worry!** to indicate that you think that something is not important. In what other situation might you use it?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- C** Give two words from the passage which have a similar meaning to **worried** and use one of them in a sentence.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- D** How does someone feel if he or she is upset?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- E** Insert the word missing from each expression below.
- 1 \_\_\_\_\_ **panic!** Get some water and throw it on the fire before it reaches the house.
  - 2 I'm worried in case \_\_\_\_\_ **has happened.** Bill didn't come home last night.
  - 3 Sue's a sensible girl and she has money for a taxi. **I'm sure she's all** \_\_\_\_\_.

## 5

## Apologizing

*Jack had decided to go to work early. He had been on holiday and had a lot of paperwork to deal with. For a start, there were several marketing reports that he would have to read. By going in so early he thought that he could work without being disturbed for a while. He was wrong!*

He had just started to read the first report when Ben knocked at his office door. 'Sorry to disturb you, Jack. I wonder if I could have a copy of last month's sales figures.'

'That's all right, Ben!' said Jack politely. 'Here it is.'

He had once more started to read the marketing report when Bill appeared at his door. 'Sorry for interrupting, Jack,' said Bill. 'Could I borrow your copy of the agenda for tomorrow's marketing meeting? I can't find mine.'

'Thanks and sorry again, Jack,' said Bill as Jack gave him the copy of the agenda.

'No problem, Bill, but I have to get on with these reports.'

Jack had got halfway through the first marketing report when Lucy arrived wanting to borrow a book.

'Excuse me for interrupting, Jack, but I need to look something up urgently.'

'No need to apologize, Lucy, but I have to read all these reports by tomorrow's meeting.'

So far Jack had been polite to his colleagues but he was beginning to get a bit annoyed at all the interruptions and he was worried about the amount of work he had to do.

He had just got back to the report when Jane knocked at the door and came in, saying, 'Forgive me for disturbing you, Jack. I'm collecting for Mary's wedding present from the staff.'

'Jane!' said Jack angrily. 'Can't you see I'm trying to work? Just at the moment I don't care about Mary's wedding present. I'll give you something later.'

Jane quickly left the room, looking upset. Jack, who was usually a very polite, kind person, felt bad about losing his temper and went after her.

'Jane, I apologize for snapping at you. I shouldn't have done it.'

'It doesn't matter, Jack,' she said. 'I shouldn't have interrupted you when you were busy.'

'Please accept my apologies, anyway,' said Jack and returned to his office, hoping for no more interruptions.

## Useful Expressions

### all right that's all right

You say **that's all right** in reply to an apology to show that the action or situation that caused the apology was not important:

- 'I'm sorry I damaged your bike, Jack.'  
'**That's all right**, Mike! The damage isn't serious. I'll be able to repair it myself.'
- 'I'm sorry I can't look after the children for you this evening.'  
'**That's all right**, Lucy! We didn't give you very much notice, and, in any case, my mother has offered to look after them.'

### apology my apologies!

You say **my apologies!** when you wish to apologize to someone for something bad, unpleasant, inconvenient, etc, that you have done:

- **My apologies!** I took your coat by mistake. Here it is.
- **My apologies!** I didn't realize that this was your seat. Please sit down!

#### Language Help

I **apologize** and **please accept my apologies** have the same meaning as **my apologies!** but they are slightly more formal:

- 'You nearly knocked me off my bike,'  
'**I apologize**. I couldn't see because of the parked cars.'
- 'That is my coat.'  
'**Please accept my apologies**. I took it from the cloakroom by mistake.'

### apologize no need to apologize

You say **no need to apologize** when someone has apologized for doing something, or for not doing something, but you think that, in the circumstances, they do not have to apologize:

- 'I'm sorry I forgot to bring back your lawnmower.'  
'**No need to apologize**. I won't be using it till next week.'
- 'Forgive me for interrupting the meeting, but you forgot to take some of the papers you might need for it.'  
'**No need to apologize**, Sara. You're quite right. I should have taken these with me.'

### excuse excuse me

You use **excuse me** when you apologize to someone for doing something, usually something minor, that may be inconvenient or may seem rather rude:

- **Excuse me!** I didn't realize you had guests. I just wanted to give you this book.



- Sara sneezed two or three times and said, **'Excuse me! I think I'm getting a cold.'**
- **Excuse me** for arriving at an inconvenient time, but we really have to discuss these business plans right away.
- Please **excuse me** for missing the first part of the meeting. The bus was very late.

### Language Help

You also use **excuse me** to attract someone's attention:

- We need some more bread. I'll call the waiter. **Excuse me!**
- **Excuse me!** You've dropped a glove.

### Language Help

You also use **excuse me** to tell someone politely that you are going to have to leave them:

- **Excuse me!** That's the taxi I ordered. I really have to go now.
- **Excuse me!** I must go and answer the phone.

### Language Help

Especially in American English, **excuse me** is also used when politely asking someone to repeat something:

- 'Could you pass me the salt, please?'  
**'Excuse me!'**  
'Could you pass me the salt, please?'
- 'Can you show me the way to the station?'  
**'Excuse me!'**  
'Can you give me directions to the station?'

## forgive forgive me

You can use **forgive me** when you apologize to someone for doing something, usually something minor, that may be inconvenient or may seem rather rude. In this context the

expression is used in much the same way as **excuse me**, but it is slightly more formal:

- **Forgive me!** I didn't realize that you were in the middle of a meeting.
- **Forgive me** for coming in the middle of your meeting, but there's a call from your wife and she says it's urgent.
- **Forgive** the unexpected visit, but I was visiting a friend in the neighbourhood and I remembered that you had just moved here.

### Language Help

You use **forgive** more commonly to mean to stop feeling angry with someone for having done something to hurt you or upset you:

- Bob will never **forgive** Jim. He told the boss a lie about Bob and Bob got the sack.
- Sara's husband treated her very badly on several occasions, but she always **forgave** him.

## matter it doesn't matter

You use **it doesn't matter** in reply to an apology to show that the action or situation that caused the apology was not important:

- 'I'm sorry that I won't be able to help you move house.'  
**'It doesn't matter,** thanks, Bill. My brother and his friends are going to help.'
- 'I'm sorry for interrupting you when you had guests.'  
**'It doesn't matter.** My brother and his family were on their way to visit my mother and just stopped for a cup of tea.'

## problem no problem

You say **no problem** in reply to an apology, often in connection with something minor:

- 'I'm sorry to come round without phoning first.'  
**'No problem, Jill! You're welcome.'**

- 'My apologies for arriving at the party so late.'

**'No problem, Mike! I know you were working late and some of the other guests have just arrived.'**

### Language Help

You can also use **no problem** as an informal reply when somebody thanks you for something:

- 'Thanks for giving me a lift to the station.'
- 'No problem! I was going into the city centre, anyway.'**

### Language Help

You can also use **no problem** to show that you can or will do something somebody has asked you to do:

- 'Could you fix this gate for me?'
- 'No problem! It probably just needs some oil.'**

## sorry

You use **sorry** in various constructions when you apologize to someone for something bad, unpleasant, inconvenient, etc, that you have done:

- **Sorry!** I didn't mean to wake you up! I didn't realize you were still asleep.
- **Sorry for** waking you. I didn't realize you were still asleep.
- **Sorry to** wake you, but there's an urgent phone call from the States for you.
- **Sorry about** the disturbance this morning. I didn't realize you were still asleep.
- I'm **sorry that** I woke you this morning, but I didn't realize that you were still asleep.

### Language Help

You also use **sorry** to show that you feel sadness or sympathy for someone when something bad or unpleasant has happened to them:

- I was **sorry** to hear that your mother is ill.
- Tom told me that your father was injured in the train crash. I'm so **sorry**.

## Exercise 5

Answer the following questions.

**A** Insert the word missing from each expression below.

- 1 **Sorry** \_\_\_\_\_ interrupting you in the middle of your speech, but your husband has an urgent message for you.
- 2 **Sorry** \_\_\_\_\_ interfere, but I don't think the accident was the child's fault.
- 3 **Sorry** \_\_\_\_\_ the quality of the food here. Apparently, their chef's just walked out.
- 4 'I'm sorry for missing the committee meeting.'  
'**No** \_\_\_\_\_ **to apologize**. It wasn't an important meeting and I know that you had a doctor's appointment.'
- 5 'My apologies for arriving so late.'  
'**No** \_\_\_\_\_! There are still plenty of people at the party.'
- 6 \_\_\_\_\_ **me!** Could you bring us the bill, please?

**B** Write down an expression which has the same meaning, and is used in much the same way as **it doesn't matter** in an informal context. Use the expression in a sentence.

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**C** **Excuse me!** is more commonly used in American English than in British English in a particular situation. What is this situation?

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**D** You can use **forgive me** to apologize to someone. In what other situation do you use the word **forgive**? Write a sentence using **forgive** in this way.

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## 6

## Local shopping

*Jill had to do some shopping to stock up her larder.*

'I'm just going to the local shops to get a few things,' said Jill to her friend Meg. 'Would you like to join me?' Meg said 'yes' and off they went.

They went to the baker's first. 'What would you like today, Mrs Smart?' asked the baker.

'I'd like half a dozen rolls, please,' said Jill, 'and one of these brown loaves. Those cakes look rather nice. I'll have four of those also, please.'

'Anything else, Mrs Smart?' asked the baker.

'No, thanks,' Jill replied. 'That's all, thank you. How much do I owe you?'

'That comes to \$12.60,' replied the baker.

The two friends went off to the butcher's, where there was a small queue. When it was their turn to be served the butcher said, 'Good morning, Mrs Smart. What can I do for you today?'

'I want a nice piece of lamb for roasting, please,' said Jill. 'How much is that piece there?'

'It weighs 2 kilos and it's \$29,' said the butcher. 'Lamb's quite expensive, just now.'

'No, that's too much,' said Jill. 'I'll take that smaller piece over there.'

The butcher weighed the piece of meat. 'That'll be \$24.50,' he said.

Jill put a fifty-dollar note on the counter.

'There you are, Mrs Smart,' said the butcher. '\$25.50 change. Next, please!'

Jill and Meg left the butcher to serve his other customers and went to the greengrocer's.

'What can I get you today, Mrs Smart?' said the greengrocer.

'A kilo of spinach, please,' said Jill, 'and do you have any garden peas?'

'Sorry,' said the greengrocer. 'Not today, I'm afraid.'

'Never mind. Give me half a kilo of green beans, instead, please,' replied Jill, 'and some oranges.'

'How many oranges would you like?' asked the greengrocer.

'A dozen, please, and **that's it for today, thank you**,' replied Jill.

'I **make that** \$10 exactly,' said the greengrocer.

Jill paid him and he put the money in the till. Jill and Meg then went to put the shopping in the car.

## Useful Expressions

### all

#### that's all, thank you

You say **that's all, thank you**, often to a shopkeeper, sales assistant or waiter, when you do not want to buy anything else:

- 'Can I get you anything else?'  
'No, **that's all, thank you**.'
- 'We have some nice fresh fish today. Would you like some?'  
'No, **that's all, thank you**.'

### be

#### that'll be ...

You say **that'll be ...** when you are telling someone the total amount of money which they owe you:

- A dozen oranges and two pounds of grapes. **That'll be** \$15, please.
- You've got two brown loaves and three cream cakes. **That'll be** \$13, please.

### Language Help

You use **that comes to ...** (see below) in the same way.

### come

#### that comes to ...

You say **that comes to ...** when you are telling someone the total amount of money which they owe you:

- The flour costs \$5.00, the nuts \$4.00 and the orange juice \$4.00. **That comes to** \$13.00.
- Two tins of tomatoes, a bottle of olive oil and a jar of red peppers. **That comes to** \$12.00.

### do

#### what can I do for you?

You say **what can I do for you?** when you are asking someone what they want, usually when you are a shopkeeper or a sales assistant, and often in quite an informal context:

- Good morning, Mrs Wilson, **what can I do for you?** We have some of your favourite bread in today.
- Hello, Peter, **what can I do for you?** Have you come to collect your computing magazine?

### else

#### anything else?

You say **anything else?** when you are asking someone if they want to buy something else. It is short for **would you like anything else?**

- That's two kilos of mince and a pound of bacon. **Anything else**, Mrs Jones?
- That's apples, grapes and pineapple. **Anything else**, today, Mr Smart?

### Language Help

You can also use **will there be anything else?** in the same way.

## get what can I get you?

You say **what can I get you?** when you are asking someone what they want, often when you are a shopkeeper, a sales assistant or a waiter:

- 'What can I get you today, Mrs Jackson?'  
'That salmon looks good. I'll have two salmon steaks, thank you.'
- 'What can I get you today, Sara? We have red and white wine, beer and orange juice.'  
'I'll have a glass of white wine, thank you, Ben.'

## give give me

You say **give me**, often followed by **please**, when you are asking someone, usually a shopkeeper or sales assistant, for something that you want:

- Those plums look juicy. **Give me** a kilo of them, **please**.
- I need some potatoes. **Give me** a kilo of the large ones.

### Language Help

You use **I'll have** (see below) in the same way.

## have I'll have

You say **I'll have**, often followed by **please**, when you are asking someone, usually a

shopkeeper or sales assistant, for something that you want:

- **I'll have** two slices of that chocolate cake, **please**. It looks delicious!
- I'm looking for some meat for a barbecue. **I'll have** four of those steaks and a kilo of pork sausages, **please**.

### Language Help

You use **give me** (see above) in the same way.

## it that's it for today, thank you

This is another quite informal way of saying **that's all, thank you** and you use it, often to a shopkeeper or sales assistant, when you do not want to buy anything else:

- 'Here is your newspaper, Mr Jones. Would you like anything else?'  
'No, **that's it for today, thank you!**'
- I'll take this bar of chocolate and a box of matches and **that's it for today, thank you!**

## like I'd like

You use **I'd like**, often followed by **please**, when you are asking someone, often a shopkeeper, sales assistant, or waiter, for something that you want:

- 'Can I get you something to drink while you're looking at the menu?'  
'Yes, **I'd like** a gin and tonic, **please**.'
- 'What kind of coffee would you like?'  
'**I'd like** a latte, **please**.'

## what would you like?

You say **what would you like?** when you are asking someone what they want, often when you are a shopkeeper, a sales assistant or a waiter:

- Have you had a look at the dessert menu?  
**What would you like?**



- **What would you like, Mrs Wilson?** We have some nice juicy cherries in today.

## make

### I make that

You say **I make that** when you are telling someone the total amount of money which they owe you:

- Let me see. You have a kilo of cherries, four apples and half a dozen pears. **I make that \$16.50.**
- You had two glasses of white wine and a bottle of sparkling mineral water. **I make that \$24.00.**

## many

### how many?

You use **how many?** when you want to know the number of things that someone wants:

- **How many apples would you like?**
- **How many cakes do you want?**

### Language Help

You use **how much?** in a similar way when you want to know what amount of something someone wants:

- **How much mince would you like?**
- **How much flour do you need?**

See also **how much ...?** below.

## much

### how much is/are ...?

You use **how much is/are ...?** when you are asking the price of something:

- **How much is that doll in the window?**
- **How much are those red apples?**

## next

### next, please!

A shopkeeper, sales assistant, etc, says **next, please!** when he or she is ready to serve the next person in the queue:

- *There's your change, Mr Brown. **Next, please!***
- *I've put all your shopping in that bag, Mrs Black. **Next, please!***

## owe

### how much do I owe you?

You say **how much do I owe you?** when you ask how much money you need to pay:

- *I don't want anything else today, thank you. **How much do I owe you?***
- *Thank you for repairing my bike so quickly. **How much do I owe you?***

You also use **how much is that?** in this way:

- *I don't need anything else today, thank you. **How much is that?***

### Language Help

A very informal expression **what's the damage?** has the same meaning:

- *We've had four glasses of white wine and two whiskies. **What's the damage?***

## sorry

A shopkeeper or sales assistant says **sorry** when he or she does not have what a customer wants:

- **Sorry**, we won't have any fresh flowers in until tomorrow.
- **Sorry**, we don't sell sandwiches any more.

## Exercise 6

Answer the following questions.

**A** Insert the word missing from each expression below.

- 1 **How** \_\_\_\_\_ apples would you like?
- 2 **I** \_\_\_\_\_ **that** \$15.00 exactly.
- 3 **I don't want anything else. That's** \_\_\_\_\_ **for today, thank you.**

**B** In what situation would a sales assistant be particularly likely to say **sorry**?

\_\_\_\_\_

**C** Write down an expression from the passage which a sales assistant might use

- 1 when he/she is ready to serve the next person in the queue.
- \_\_\_\_\_

- 2 when asking if you want anything more.
- \_\_\_\_\_

**D** Write down two expressions from the passage which a sales assistant would use when telling you how much your shopping costs.

\_\_\_\_\_

**E** Write down an expression from the passage which has the same meaning as the informal phrase **what's the damage?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**F** You use **I'd like** or **I'll have** when you are asking for something in a shop. Write down another expression from the passage which you would use in the same way.

\_\_\_\_\_

**G** Write down an informal expression from the passage which has the same meaning as **what can I get for you?**

\_\_\_\_\_

*Mary had been asked to a party and she wanted to buy a new dress for the occasion. She went with Anne to a local department store to visit the ladies' fashion department.*

As they were searching along the rails for something suitable, a sales assistant approached them, saying, 'Can I help you, madam?'

'No, thank you,' replied Mary. 'At the moment I'm just having a look.'

When Mary found a dress which she really liked, the shop did not seem to have it in her size. She called the sales assistant over and said, 'Do you have this dress in other sizes? This one is too big. I take a size 12.'

The sales assistant replied, 'I don't think so, madam, but I'll just check.' After a few minutes she returned, saying, 'I'm sorry, madam. I'm afraid that is the only dress in that style that we have in stock. We could order it, if you like, but it will take about a week.'

'Unfortunately, I need it for tomorrow evening. I'll have another look.' Mary replied.

'This is very smart,' said Anne. 'What do you think?'

'It's very nice,' said Mary. 'How much is it?'

'It's \$800,' replied Anne. 'It's probably too expensive.'

'It certainly is,' said Mary. 'I want something far cheaper than that.'

'What about this one?' asked Anne. 'It's much more reasonably priced.'

'I'd like to try it on,' said Mary, 'and I'll try these two on as well. Can you see where the fitting rooms are?'

'They're over there, but we'd better ask the assistant first.'

'That one didn't fit very well,' said Mary to Anne, 'and I don't think the colour of that one really suits me, but this one is just what I'm looking for.'

'I'll take this one, please,' she said to the sales assistant.

'Very well, madam. The cash desk is over here,' said the sales assistant. Then she asked,



**Do you have a store card?’**

‘No, I don’t,’ said Mary. ‘I’d like to **pay by Visa**.’ Then she went home, very pleased with her purchase.

## Useful Expressions

### expensive

#### it's too expensive

You say **it's too expensive** when something costs more than you can, or want to, pay for it or when it costs more than you think it's worth:

- *That's a lovely skirt, but **it's too expensive** and I'd hardly ever wear it.*
- *That chocolate cake looks delicious, but **it's much too expensive** for a children's tea party. I'll bake one myself.*

#### Language Help

You can also use **it's too dear** with the same meaning. This expression is slightly more informal:

- *My mother has stopped going to the opera. She says the tickets **are too dear**.*

### fit

#### didn't/doesn't fit very well

You say something **didn't fit very well** when it was either too large, too small or the wrong shape for you:

- *I would have bought that dress but it **didn't fit very well**.*
- *I must have put on weight. This dress **doesn't fit very well** now.*

### help

#### can I help you?

You use **can I help you?** when you are a sales assistant asking a customer if they need any assistance. It is sometimes followed by **madam** or **sir**, although this is formal and less common than it was formerly:

- ***Can I help you?** These dresses are all the new season's.*
- ***Can I help you, sir?** We have more ties over there.*

#### Language Help

You can also use **may I help you?** in the same way.

### it

#### it's ...

You use **it's ...** to say how much something costs:

- *'How much does that handbag cost?'  
**'It's \$1,200.'***
- *'What's the price of that silver necklace?'  
**'It's \$600.'***

### look

#### I'm just having a look

You say **I'm just having a look** when you do not need any sales help, but are just looking

at what is for sale in the shop to see if there is anything you would like to buy:

- I don't intend buying a dress today. **I'm just having a look** and I'll come back on Saturday if I find something I like.
- 'Are you going to buy a dress for the wedding today, Jane?'  
'I might do that if I see anything I like, but I'm really **just having a look** today.'

### Language Help

You use **I'm just looking** in the same way:

- 'Can I help you?'  
'No, thanks. **I'm just looking.**'

## much

### how much is it?

You use **how much is it?** when you are asking the price of something:

- I like that coat. **How much is it?**
- That's a very smart handbag. **How much is it?**

## order

### we could order it

The expression **we could order it** is used by a shopkeeper or sales assistant to indicate that they do not have a particular item in the shop at that time, but that they could get it for you:

- I'm sorry. We do not have that model of fridge in stock, but **we could order it** for you.
- Unfortunately, we do not have that coat in your size, but **we could order it** for you.

## pay

### pay by ...

You say **pay by ...** when you are indicating how you intend to pay for goods in a shop:

- I'd like to **pay by cheque**.
- I'd like to **pay by credit card**.

## size

### do you have this in other sizes?

You say **do you have this in other sizes?** when you want to know if a shop has a certain item in larger or smaller versions:

- I like this suit, but it's too small. **Do you have it in other sizes?**
- I think this dress would suit me, but it's too big. **Do you have it in other sizes?**

## I take a size ...

You say **I take a size ...** when you are telling someone what size of clothes or shoes fits you. Sizes, both in clothes and shoes, can vary from country to country.

- These shoes are too large. **I take a size 5.**
- I need a smaller size. **I take a size 10** in dresses.

## stock

### have in stock

You use **have in stock** when you have something in a shop available for sale:

- These are the only three models of dishwasher which we **have in stock**.
- We **have those in stock** in the summer, but not in winter.

## store

### do you have a store card?

A store card is a card provided by a particular shop, or chain of shops, to regular customers so that they use it to buy goods and pay for them later:

- That comes to \$600. **Do you have a store card?**

- How would you like to pay? **Do you have a store card?**

## take

### **I'll take this one, please**

You say **I'll take this one, please** when you have decided that you want to buy something in a shop:

- *I couldn't decide which of these sweaters I like best, but **I'll take this one, please.***
- **I'll take this one, please.** *The other two sweaters don't fit very well.*

## try

### **I'd like to try it on**

You say **I'd like to try it on** when you want to put on a piece of clothing in a shop to see if it fits or if you like it:

- *I do like that blouse. **I'd like to try it on, please.***
- *The colours of that skirt are very pretty. **I'd like to try it on.***



## Exercise 7

Answer the following questions.

- A** What expression would you use if you want to put on a dress in a shop to see if it fits or if you like it?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- B** Write down an expression from the passage which a sales assistant would use when he or she wants to know if a customer needs any assistance or advice.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- C** Insert the word missing from each expression below.
- 1 I don't want to buy anything. *I'm just having a* \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - 2 This skirt **doesn't** \_\_\_\_\_ **very well**. It's rather tight.
  - 3 That model of fridge is in our catalogue, but we **don't have it in** \_\_\_\_\_ at the moment.
- D** What expression from the passage would you use to a sales assistant
- 1 when you have decided what you want to buy?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 when you are telling the sales assistant what size you need?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- E** Write down an expression from the passage which means the same as **it's too dear**.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- F** What expression do you use when you want to know what something costs?
- \_\_\_\_\_

## 8

## Special greetings

*There was great excitement in the Harrison house. For the first time in five years all the members of the family would be together at home for Christmas.*

When Christmas Day dawned, Meg, the eldest daughter, was the first to join her mother in the kitchen. '**Happy Christmas**, Mum!' she said. 'It's good to be home.' Then came Jane, the youngest daughter, looking for a cup of coffee and saying, '**Merry Christmas!**'

Just then the Harrisons' next-door neighbour, Mr Foster, came round with a Christmas card which had been delivered to the wrong address.

'I can see you're all busy and so I won't stay,' he said. '**Have a good Christmas!**'

The Harrison family all helped to prepare the Christmas dinner and a magnificent dinner it was too, with a huge turkey and a delicious Christmas pudding. At the end of it everyone was very full!

Boxing Day, the day after Christmas, was Mrs Harrison's birthday. She said that, at her age, she wanted to forget about her birthday but her husband and children were determined to celebrate it.

Beth took her mother breakfast in bed, saying, '**Happy birthday**, Mum!' The rest of her children came into the room and repeated the greeting.

Mrs Harrison's sister, Anna, who lived in America, had left a message overnight on the answering machine. '**Best wishes** on your birthday,' the message began.

There was a message also from Mrs Harrison's young goddaughter saying, '**Many happy returns!** Have a great day! Sorry I can't be with you!'

The family were not really hungry after eating all that food on Christmas Day, but they all went out for dinner to celebrate their mother's birthday. Most of them had to leave the next day and they felt sad.

By New Year's Eve there was only Jim left and, as the bells for the new year began to ring, he said, '**Happy New Year**, Mum and Dad.'

'**All the best** for 2004, Jim!' said his mother.

'**A good new year** to you, Jim!' said his father.

## Useful Expressions

### best all the best!

You say or write **all the best!** to someone to show that you hope they will be well, successful, fortunate, etc:

- *I hear you're starting a new job. **All the best!***
- *Tom told me that you're going to be a father. **All the best!***

#### Language Help

You often use **all the best!** when you are saying goodbye to someone or ending a letter or email:

- **All the best!** *Enjoy your stay in America!*
- *Write soon!*

**All the best!**

James

### birthday happy birthday!

You say or write **happy birthday!** to someone on their birthday as a conventional greeting:

- **Happy birthday!** *I hope you like your present.*
- **Happy birthday!** *I'm glad you didn't guess that we were planning a surprise party.*

#### Language Help

You also find **happy birthday!** in commercial greetings cards.

You can also use **happy birthday** in such constructions as:

- *I wish you **happy birthday** for tomorrow.*

The other conventional birthday greeting is **many happy returns!** (see below).

### Christmas happy Christmas!

You say or write **happy Christmas!** to someone as a slightly less common alternative conventional greeting to **merry Christmas!** (see below). It is used in the same way:

- **Happy Christmas!** *We're going to open our presents soon.*
- **Happy Christmas!** *I hope you get your shopping finished on time.*

#### Language Help

You also find **happy Christmas!** on commercial greetings cards where it is sometimes written **happy Xmas!**

### have a good Christmas!

You use **have a good Christmas!** as an alternative to **happy Christmas!** (see above) and **merry Christmas!** (see below).

- **Have a good Christmas!** *I'll see you after New Year.*
- *The office is just closing for the holiday period. **Have a good Christmas!***

### merry Christmas!

You say or write **merry Christmas!** as a conventional greeting to someone either on Christmas Day or in the period that includes Christmas Day and the days before it:

- **Merry Christmas!** *The turkey is nearly ready and we'll be sitting down to dinner soon.*
- **Merry Christmas!** *I hope you enjoy the Christmas Eve party.*



### Language Help

You also find **merry Christmas!** on commercial greetings cards where it is sometimes written **merry Xmas!** In this context the greeting sometimes takes the form of **merry Christmas and a happy New Year** (see below).

### new happy New Year!

You say or write **happy New Year!** as a conventional greeting to someone on New Year's Day (1 January) or the period around it. You can also use **a happy New Year!**:

- *The church bells are ringing. It's New Year's Day. **Happy New Year!***
- ***Happy New Year!** Are you happy to be back at work after the holiday?*

### Language Help

There are commercial greetings cards which just say **happy New Year!** but New Year cards are much less common than Christmas cards. It is however quite common to find cards which combine Christmas and New Year greetings. See **merry Christmas!** (above).

### a good New Year!

You can use **a good New Year!** as a much less common alternative to **happy New Year!** (see above):

- ***A good New Year!** Have you recovered from the New Year Eve's party yet?*
- ***A good New Year!** It seems strange to be back at work after the holiday.*

### return many happy returns!

You say or write **many happy returns!** as an alternative conventional birthday greeting to **happy birthday!** The longer form of the expression **many happy returns of the day!** is less common.

- ***Many happy returns!** I hope you have a lovely birthday.*
- ***Many happy returns!** I'm sorry I can't be with you on your birthday.*
- *I hear it's your birthday. **Many happy returns of the day!***

### wish best wishes

You say or write **best wishes** to someone to show that you hope they will be well, successful, fortunate, etc, although it is more common in written English:

- *Tom told me that you celebrate your silver wedding anniversary tomorrow. **Best wishes!***
- *Your mother told me that you begin your university course next week. **Best wishes!***

### Language Help

You can also use **best wishes** to end a letter or email:

- *Let me have a reply as soon as possible.*

#### **Best wishes**

Lucy

You can also use **best wishes** in such constructions as:

- *Please send Tom our **best wishes**.*
- *Give Lucy our **best wishes** when you see her.*

## Exercise 8

Answer the following questions.

- A** Write down a longer form of the expression **many happy returns!**
- 
- B** Write down a less common alternative of the expression **Happy New Year!**
- 
- C** How is **Merry Christmas!** sometimes printed on commercial greetings cards?
- 
- D** What expression from the passage do you sometimes use to end a letter or an email?
- 
- E** Insert the word missing from each expression below.
- 1 *Jim is sixty tomorrow and I've sent him a card saying \_\_\_\_\_ **birthday!***
  - 2 ***Merry** \_\_\_\_\_ ! I hope you finish your shopping on time.*
  - 3 *Anna couldn't come to my graduation party, but she asked her brother to give me her **best** \_\_\_\_\_ .*

*It was Jane and Bill's wedding day. The wedding service was over and the young couple and their guests were at the reception. Jane and Bill had received many wedding gifts and they were going around thanking people for them. Obviously, they would send out formal letters of thanks later on but the wedding reception provided them with a good opportunity to thank some people personally.*

**'Thank you very much for** the lovely wine glasses you sent us,' said Jane to her Aunt Liz. 'They're so beautiful that I'll be afraid to use them in case I break them.'

**'Not at all!** I'm glad you like them,' said Aunt Liz, 'and I hope you will drink lots of good wine from them.'

**'Thanks a lot for** the set of pots and pans, Jean,' Bill said to his cousin. 'They'll be very useful.'

**'That's all right,'** said Jean. 'I hope you'll learn to cook and not leave all the cooking to Jane.'

**'Many thanks for** the beautiful rug you gave us,' said Jane to her Uncle Peter. '**It was very generous of you** and I just love the colours in it. And thank you for giving us your writing desk. **You really shouldn't have.** I know it's valuable and that you've always loved it.'

**'You're welcome!'** said her uncle. 'I hope you'll be very happy in your new home.'

**'Thanks for** the table mats,' said Bill to his friend Jack. 'You'll have to come round and have dinner off them when we get back from our honeymoon.'

**'Don't mention it,** Bill. I just hope you and Jane like them.'

**'Cheers for** being my best man,' Bill said to Tom, who had been his friend since their schooldays.

**'It was nothing,'** replied Tom. 'I hope you'll do the same for me when I get married.'

Just before the young couple left the reception, Jane said to her father, '**Thank you for** giving us such a lovely wedding.'

**'It was my pleasure, dear,'** he said. 'I hope you and Bill will be very happy.'



## Useful Expressions

### all

#### not at all!

You use **not at all!** as a polite response to someone thanking you for something:

- 'Thank you very much for the delicious chocolates.'  
'**Not at all!**'
- 'Thank you for driving me home.'  
'**Not at all!**'

### all right

#### that's all right

You use **that's all right** as a polite response to someone thanking you for something:

- 'Thanks a lot for the book. I found it very interesting.'  
'**That's all right!** I'm glad you enjoyed it.'
- 'Thanks for lending me your bike.'  
'**That's all right.** I didn't need it today.'

#### Language Help

You also say **that's all right** in reply to an apology to show that the action or situation that caused the apology was not important:

- 'I'm sorry to disturb you.'  
'**That's all right!**'

### cheer

#### cheers for ...

The expression **cheers for ...** is a very informal form of **thank you for ...** used in British English:

- **Cheers for** the birthday present.
- **Cheers for** helping me paint the living room.

### generous

#### it was very generous of you

**It was very generous of you** is a polite expression that is often added to some form of **thank you** when thanking someone for something:

- 'Thanks a lot for the present. **It was very generous of you.**'
- 'Thank you very much for the necklace. **It was very generous of you.**'

#### Language Help

You can also use **it was very good of you** and **it was very kind of you** in the same way.

### mention

#### don't mention it

You use **don't mention it** as a polite response to someone thanking you for something:

- 'Thank you very much for the birthday cake.'  
'**Don't mention it!**'
- 'Thanks for giving me a lift to the airport.'  
'**Don't mention it!**'

### nothing

#### it was nothing

You use **it was nothing** as a polite response to someone thanking you for doing something:

- 'Thanks a lot for driving me home.'  
'**It was nothing!**'
- 'Thanks for looking after the dog for me.'  
'**It was nothing!**'

## pleasure

### it was my pleasure

You say **it was my pleasure** as a polite response when someone thanks you:

- 'Thank you for giving me such a lovely handbag.'  
**'It was my pleasure!'**
- 'Thank you for baking a birthday cake for me.'  
**'It was my pleasure.'**

## shouldn't

### you really shouldn't have

You say **you really shouldn't have** when thanking someone for something, especially for something expensive or valuable:

- Thank you for the beautiful gold necklace.  
**You really shouldn't have!**
- Thank you very much for the beautiful wine glasses. **You really shouldn't have.**

### Language Help

You can also say **you shouldn't have**.

## thank (v)

### thank you for ...

You say **thank you for ...** when you are thanking someone for something they have given you or done for you:

- **Thank you for** the beautiful flowers which you sent me.
- **Thank you for** giving me a lift home.

### thank you very much for ...

The expression **thank you very much for ...** is a more emphatic form of **thank you for ...**:

- **Thank you very much for** the book which you sent me on my birthday.
- **Thank you very much for** lending me a dress for the party.

## thanks (n)

### thanks for ...

The expression **thanks for ...** is a slightly more informal form of **thank you for ...**:

- **Thanks for** the sweets, Jill.
- **Thanks for** helping me wash the dishes, Meg.

### many thanks for ...

The expression **many thanks for ...** is a more emphatic form of **thanks for ...**:

- **Many thanks for** the magazines.
- **Many thanks for** letting us borrow your car.

### thanks a lot for ...

The expression **thanks a lot for ...** is a more emphatic form of **thanks for ...**:

- **Thanks a lot for** the lovely flowers.
- **Thanks a lot for** looking after the children for us.

## welcome

### you're welcome!

You use **you're welcome!** as a polite response to someone thanking you for something, especially common in American English:

- 'Thank you for the loan of the book.'  
**'You're welcome!'**
- 'Thank you for helping me cook the meal.'  
**'You're welcome!'**

## Exercise 9

Answer the following questions.

- A** What polite response to an expression of thanks is more common in American English than in British English?

---

- B** Insert the word missing from each expression below.

- 1 *Thanks a \_\_\_\_\_ for the present.*
- 2 *Thank you very \_\_\_\_\_ for your help.*
- 3 *This present must have been very expensive. You really \_\_\_\_\_ have!*
- 4 *'Thank you. It was very kind of you to drive me home.'*  
*'Don't \_\_\_\_\_ it!'*
- 5 *'Thanks for the beautiful flowers.'*  
*'It was my \_\_\_\_\_ !'*

- C** In what situation would you use the informal British English expression **cheers for ...?**

---

- D** You sometimes say **it was very generous of you** when you are thanking someone for something. What similar expressions can you also use in this way?

---

---

- E** Give two situations in which you might use the expression **that's all right**.

---

---



*Members of staff at Bennett's, a textile company, were attending a leaving party. This was not all that uncommon. From time to time people left and the occasion was often marked by a small party. This party, however, was unusual in that it was being held to say goodbye to several people at once. Three people were leaving, although not all for the same reason.*

Ron, the sales manager, was leaving because he had reached retirement age. He had been with the firm for twenty years and was very popular. Several of his colleagues gathered round him to **wish him well**.

'**All the best**, Ron!' said Bert from the accounts department. 'Enjoy your retirement and don't think any more about work.'

'**Good luck**, Ron!' said the managing director. 'Have a relaxing retirement. You've earned it. My wife is sorry that she can't be here this evening but she **sends you her best wishes**.'

'**The best of luck** in your retirement, Ron! I'll be joining you soon. I've only got two years to go!'

Sally, who worked in the design department, was leaving to get married. Just after the wedding she and her husband were going to work overseas in Canada for two years.

Lucy, who had just returned from maternity leave, said to Sally, 'I knew you were leaving, but I've just heard that you're going to get married. **I hope you'll both be very happy!**'

'**Every good wish for** your wedding day, Sally,' said Pat, who had been Sally's secretary, 'and have a good time in Canada.'

Frank, who worked in administration, had just heard that he had won a scholarship to study business management in America. He would be leaving at the end of the month.

'**Best wishes**, Frank!' said the managing director. 'Please get in touch when you've finished your studies. We'd love to have you back.'

'Good for you, Frank!' said the head of administration. 'You beat a lot of other candidates to win that scholarship. **I hope all goes well** in the States!'

Then Ron, Sally and Frank thanked them all for their good wishes and everyone had a few drinks to celebrate. 'Here's to all of you who are leaving!' said the managing director, lifting his glass.

## Useful Expressions

### best

#### all the best!

You say or write **all the best!** to someone to show that you hope they will be well, successful, fortunate, etc:

- *I hear you've got a new job. **All the best!***
- *Ben told me you're sitting your driving test tomorrow. **All the best!***

#### Language Help

You often use **all the best!** when you are saying goodbye to someone or ending a letter or email:

- **All the best!** *Enjoy your stay in America!*
- *Write soon!*  
**All the best!**  
James

### happy

#### I hope you'll both be very happy!

You say **I hope you'll both be very happy!** to mean **good luck!** to two people who are getting married:

- *Sue told me that you are going to marry Tom. **I hope you'll both be very happy!***
- *I'm sorry that I won't be able to come to the wedding, but **I hope you'll both be very happy!***

### here

#### here's to ...!

You say **here's to ...!** when you lift a glass and drink from it in order to show that you hope that someone will be well, successful, fortunate, etc. This is called a toast:

- **Here's to Bill and Mary!**
- **Here's to you, John!** *We hope that you enjoy your new job.*

### luck

#### good luck!

You say **good luck!** to someone to show that you hope they will be successful, fortunate, etc:

- *I hear the exams are tomorrow. **Good luck!***
- *The auditions for the school play are next week. **Good luck!***

#### Language Help

You can also use the construction **good luck with ...!**:

- **Good luck with your music exam!**

### the best of luck!

You say **the best of luck!** to someone to show that you hope they will be successful, fortunate, etc:

- *I hear that you're taking your driving test tomorrow. **The best of luck!***

- So you've applied for the manager's job.  
**The best of luck!**

### Language Help

You can also say **best of luck!**:

- The job interviews are to be held next week.  
**Best of luck!**

You can also use the construction **the best of luck with ...!**:

- **The best of luck with your college interview!**

## well

### I hope all goes well

You say or write **I hope all goes well** to someone to show that you hope they will be well, successful, fortunate, etc:

- Mum said your job interview's tomorrow. **I hope all goes well.**
- Jean mentioned that you're going into hospital tomorrow. **I hope all goes well.**

## wish (n)

### best wishes

You say or write **best wishes** to someone to show that you hope they will be well, successful, fortunate, etc, although it is more common in written English:

- Tom told me that you celebrate your silver wedding anniversary tomorrow. **Best wishes!**
- Your mother told me that you begin your university course next week. **Best wishes!**

### Language Help

You can also use **best wishes** to end a letter or email:

- Let me have a reply as soon as possible.

**Best wishes!**

Lucy

You can also use **best wishes** in such constructions as:

- Please send Tom our **best wishes**.
- Give Lucy our **best wishes** when you see her.

## every good wish

The expression is a slightly more emphatic form of **best wishes**:

- This is your last day at school. **Every good wish** for the future.
- Mum wrote and told me that you're having a baby. **Every good wish!**

## wish (v)

### wish someone well

You say that you **wish someone well** to show you hope that they will be well, successful, fortunate, etc:

- John is off to university tomorrow and we're having a party to **wish him well**.
- I hope to see Lucy before she leaves so that I can **wish her well**.

### Language Help

You can also use the construction **wish someone well with or in**:

- I **wish you well in** your new job.
- I **wish you well with** your science project.



## Exercise 10

Answer the following questions.

**A** Write down an expression which is an emphatic form of **best wishes**.

---

**B** Insert the word missing from each expression below.

- 1 I \_\_\_\_\_ **you well in** your drama course.
- 2 Tomorrow's the day you go in for your operation, isn't it? I \_\_\_\_\_ **all goes well**.
- 3 **Good** \_\_\_\_\_ **with** your job-hunting!
- 4 Is your exam tomorrow? **All the** \_\_\_\_\_ !

**C** In what situation would you be likely to say **I hope you'll both be very happy!?**

---

**D** You say **good luck!** to someone to show that you hope they will be successful, fortunate, etc. What is a similar expression that you may use in a similar situation?

---

**E** What expression in the passage is an example of a toast?

---

## 11

## Greeting people

*It was 8 o'clock in the morning and Sue was leaving for work.*

As she was going down her garden path her elderly neighbour, Mr Jackson, called out, 'Good morning, Sue! Lovely morning, isn't it?'

'Morning, Mr Jackson! Yes, it's nice!'

As she walked along the road to the station she met her friend Jane going in the opposite direction. 'Hi, Sue!' said Jane.

'Hi, Jane!' said Sue. 'Are you not going to work today?'

'Yes, but I'm going in later. I've got an appointment at the dentist's.'

'Hi, you two!' called their friend Mary from across the street.

'Hi, Mary!' said Sue as Mary crossed the road. 'I can't stay and chat now or I'll miss the train.'

'How are you doing, Jane?' Mary asked as Sue walked away.

'I'm OK, thanks, Mary!' replied Jane, 'except that I'm on my way to the dentist's and I'm late! I must go. I'll phone you tonight.'

Meanwhile, Sue made her way to the station. She knew several people on the platform as they all travelled together most mornings.

Jack was one of those standing there and he said, 'Morning Sue! How are you?'

'I'm fine, thanks, Jack! And you?'

'I'm very well, thanks. I've just been on holiday.'

'Hello, Sue!' called Peter, hurrying along the platform. 'I was worried in case I'd missed the train.'

'Hello, Peter!' replied Sue. 'The train's not due for another five minutes.'

When the train came, they all got into it and went off to their various workplaces for the day. Many of them met in the evening again as they caught the same train home after work.

When Mary arrived at the station, she was surprised to see Mr Jackson on the platform. 'Good evening, Sue!' he said. 'Have you had a hard day at the office?'

'Evening, Mr Jackson! No, I've had quite a good day, actually, but I don't often see you on this train.'

'No, I usually try to avoid the busy times, but I had a late appointment with my lawyer in the city.'

'Well, we can travel home together,' said Sue. Just then the train arrived and everyone rushed forward to get a seat.

## Useful Expressions

### and and you?

You say **and you?** in reply to someone who has asked you how you are:

- 'I haven't seen you for some time, Jane. How are you?'  
'I'm very well, thanks, Mary. **And you?**'
- 'Good morning, Tom! How are you?'  
'I'm fine, John. **And you?**'

#### Language Help

You can say **how are you?** or **and how are you?** instead:

- 'Hello, Jill. **How are you today?**'  
'I'm fine, thanks. **And how are you?**'

### are how are you?

You say **how are you?** as a conventional greeting to ask about someone's health and happiness, whether or not you have any reason to believe that they have been ill or unhappy and whether or not you really want to know how they are:

- 'Hello, James. **How are you** this morning?'  
'I'm fine, thanks, Mike. **How are you?**'
- 'Tom told me that you had to go to hospital last week, Jane. **How are you** now?'  
'I'm fine, thanks, Peter. I was just having a small operation and I've recovered completely.'

### do how are you doing?

This is an informal expression meaning the same as **how are you?**:

- Hello, Mike! I haven't seen you since Christmas. **How are you doing?**
- Hi, Jim! I haven't seen you for a long time. **How are you doing?**

#### Language Help

Two other informal expressions with the same meaning are **how's it going?** and **how are things?**:

- Hi, Jack! **how's it going?**
- Hi, Sara! **How are things?**



## evening

### good evening

You say **good evening** to someone as a greeting when you meet them in the evening. This is often shortened to **evening!**:

- **Good evening**, Jim. Have you just finished work?
- **Evening**, Jack! You're on a later train than usual.

## fine

### I'm fine

You say **I'm fine** in reply to someone who has asked how you are. Even if you are not really feeling fine it is conventional to say that you are, rather than to tell someone what is wrong with you. The expression is often shortened to **fine**:

- 'Good morning, Jean! How are you?'  
'**I'm fine**, thank you, Mary. How are you?'
- 'Hi, Ben! How are you?'  
'**Fine**, thanks, Pete. And how are you?'

#### Language Help

You use **I'm very well** and **I'm OK** in the same way except that **I'm OK** is more informal:

- 'Good morning, Jill. How are you today?'  
'**I'm very well**, thank you, Mary. How are you?'
- 'Hi, Bill. how are you?'  
'**I'm OK**, thanks. And you?'

## hello!

You use **hello!** as a conventional greeting when you meet someone:

- **Hello**, Jane! Where are you off to in such a hurry?
- **Hello**, Mary! I'm sorry I'm late.

#### Language Help

You also say **hello!** when you answer the phone:

- **Hello!** This is Jane Brown speaking.

You also say **hello!** to the person who answers the phone when you are making a phone call:

- **Hello!** I'd like to speak to the manager, please.

## hi!

You use **hi!** as an informal alternative to **hello!** when you meet someone:

- **Hi**, Tom! How are you doing?
- **Hi**, Lucy! I haven't seen you for ages.

## morning

### good morning

You say **good morning** to someone as a greeting when you meet them in the morning. This is often shortened to **morning!**:

- **Good morning**, Mr Brown. I'm just off to the newsagent to collect my newspaper.
- **Morning**, Lucy! I can't stop to chat because I'm already late!

## Exercise 11

Answer the following questions.

- A** What informal expression in the passage means the same as **how are you**?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- B** You say **good morning** to someone as a greeting when you meet them in the morning. What is this often shortened to?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- C** What is an informal form of **hello**!?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- D** You can say **I'm very well** or **I'm fine** when someone asks how you are. Give an informal alternative of these from the passage.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- E** In what situation would you use **and you**?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- F** What is a longer version of **and you**?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- G** When do you use **hello**! when it is not related to a telephone conversation?  
\_\_\_\_\_

*The principal of the school had decided to hold a Careers Day for students who would be leaving school the following year. Many of the students had taken the opportunity to go along and receive information and advice on what kind of jobs were open to them. Some of them took a break from the exhibition to discuss their career plans.*

**'I'd like to** be a pilot,' said John, 'but I'm not sure what qualifications I'd need. I'm going to ask about it today.'

**'I want to** go to drama college but my parents want me to study something that will get me a secure job,' said Lucy. 'They say acting is a very uncertain profession, but I hope I can persuade them to change their minds.'

**'I'm going to** be an accountant,' said Jim. 'Maths is my best subject and my father and uncle are both accountants. They want me to join the family firm but **I would rather** do my training somewhere else and perhaps join my father and uncle later on.'

**'I'm planning to** take a year off before going to university to do some travelling, but I want to fix up my university courses before I go,' said Bill. '**I've decided to** do a degree in business studies but I'm not sure which university to apply to.'

**'I'm hoping to** become a vet,' said Meg. 'I know the training's long and hard and that it can be a very tough job, but it's something I've always wanted to do. My aunt's a country vet and I've worked with her in the school holidays.'

**'I wish I could** be a professional football player,' said Ben, 'but I'll never be good enough for that. I've played for our local team for the last two seasons, but that's as far as I'll get. I'm going to find out about becoming a PE teacher.'

**'Before today I intended to** study law,' said Amy, 'but now I'm not so sure. I never realized there were so many interesting courses available.'

**'I fancy starting up** my own catering business,' said Mary, 'but obviously I can't do that right away. I'm going to train to be a chef first.'

At that they all started once again to gather up more careers information.



## Useful Expressions

### decide

#### I've decided to

You say **I've decided to** when you have made up your mind to do something and are not expressing any doubts about it:

- **I've decided to** go by train. *I don't like flying.*
- **I've decided to** sell my house and move to the country.

#### Language Help

The expression **I've made the decision** means the same, but it suggests that you have thought about the subject carefully or for a long time before deciding:

- *I've given a lot of thought to what I should do and **I've made the decision** to do absolutely nothing.*

### fancy

#### I fancy

You use **I fancy** when you wish to say in an informal context that you would like something or would like to do something:

- **I fancy** a job in advertising.
- **I fancy** doing a drama course at college.

### go

#### I'm going to

You say **I'm going to** when you have made up your mind to do something and are not expressing any doubts about it:

- **I'm going to** invite all the neighbours to my party.
- **I'm going to** spend Christmas with my parents.

### hope

#### I'm hoping to

You say **I'm hoping to** do something when you want to do something and think that it might be possible to do so, but are not sure:

- **I'm hoping to** study science at university but it depends on my final school exam results.
- **I'm hoping to** take a year off before starting work after university, but I need to save a lot of money in order to do that.

### intend

#### I intend to

You say **I intend to** when you have made up your mind to do something and are not expressing any doubts about it. The expression is slightly more emphatic and slightly more formal than **I've decided to** and **I'm going to**:

- **I intend to** apply for the post of manager.
- **I intend to** look for a house near the sea.

#### Language Help

A more formal form of this expression is **it is my intention to**:

- **It is my intention to** fly to Paris and then take the train.
- **It is my intention to** leave the house to my nephew when I die.

### like

#### I'd like to

The expression **I'd like to** is a more polite form of saying **I want to**:

- **I'd like to** go to the theatre tonight.
- **I'd like to** take a course in French cooking.

## plan

### I'm planning to

You say **I'm planning to** do something when you have made up your mind to do something and are making arrangements to do so:

- ***I'm planning to** spend a year travelling before going to university.*
- ***I'm planning to** buy a new computer, but I don't have quite enough money yet.*

## want

### I want to

You say **I want to** when you have a desire to do something:

- ***I want to** go to Australia as soon as I have saved enough money.*
- ***I want to** learn to drive as soon as I'm old enough.*

## wish

### I wish I could

You say **I wish I could** do something when you want to do something very much although this is not very likely or not possible:

- ***I wish I could** buy a house in that area, but property there is far too expensive for me.*
- ***I wish I could** persuade my friend to see a doctor, but she absolutely refuses to do so.*

## Exercise 12

Answer the following questions.

- A** It is **my intention to** do something is rather a formal expression. Write down a less formal expression from the passage which has the same meaning.
- 

- B** Of what is **I'd like to** a more polite form?
- 

- C** Write down an informal expression from the passage which means that you would like something or would like to do something.
- 

- D** Insert the word missing from each expression below.

- 1 **I've made the** \_\_\_\_\_ *and I will not change my mind.*
- 2 **I** \_\_\_\_\_ **I could** take a holiday, but I am far too busy at work to get away.

- E** What expression would you use

- 1 when you want to do something, think that it may be possible but are not sure?  

---
- 2 when you have decided to do something and are making arrangements to do so?  

---



*Sue and the friends she shared a flat with had decided to hold a party on the following Saturday night. It was to be a completely informal affair and so they were not sending out invitations. They would ask people in person or phone them.*

Sue met Meg on her way to college and said, '**Would you like to come** to a party on Saturday?' she asked. 'We're having one at the flat.'

'**I'd love to come**, thanks,' replied Meg. 'What time does it start?'

'About 8 o'clock,' answered Sue.

Next, Sue met Jack. '**How about coming** to a party at the flat on Saturday night, Jack?'

'**I'd love to come**, Sue, **but** I'm going home to visit my parents this weekend,' replied Jack.

Meanwhile Jane, who shared a flat with Sue, had met Anna. 'We're throwing a party at the flat on Saturday night. **Can you come?**'

'Yes,' said Anna. '**I'd like to come very much**. I haven't been to a party for ages. I'll really look forward to it.'

Just then Jane saw Bob and called, 'Bob, we've decided to have a party at the flat on Saturday. **Do you fancy coming?**'

'**Thanks for the invite**,' said Bob, 'but I'm going to have to **turn it down**. I'm working in my father's restaurant on Saturday night.'

Sara, who shared the flat with Sue and Jane, decided to ask her English tutor, Ken Smith. He and his wife were much younger than most of the other college teachers and they got on very well with the students. She rang him up to explain about the party and to ask, '**Do you want to come?**'

'Sorry, Sara. **It's very nice of you to ask us**,' replied Ken, 'but **we won't be able to make it**. We find it very difficult to get a babysitter on Saturday nights.'

Sara then rang their friend Mike and said, 'Hi, Mike! There's a party at our place on Saturday night and **you're invited**.'

'Hi, Sara!' replied Mike. 'I'll have to take a rain check on it, I'm afraid. I'm going hill-walking at the weekend.'

All three flatmates invited several more people who all accepted the invitations and the party was a great success.

## Useful Expressions

### accept

#### accept an/the invitation

When you **accept an invitation**, you say 'yes' when someone invites you to something or to do something:

- I'm writing to **accept your kind invitation** to dinner. I look forward to seeing you on Saturday evening.
- Thanks for asking me to the party. I'd love to **accept the invitation**.

#### Language Help

The expression **take someone up on an invitation** means the same but is less common:

- I'd like to **take you up on your invitation** to play in the golf match next Saturday.
- I'd love to **take you up on your invitation** to join your theatre party.

The opposite of **accept an invitation** is **refuse an invitation** or **turn down an invitation** (see below):

- Jane asked me to her wedding, but, unfortunately, I had to **refuse the invitation**.
- I was sorry that I had to **turn down the invitation** to Jim's party, but I had to go away on business.

### ask

#### it's nice of you to ask

You say **it's nice of you to ask** me as a way of thanking someone politely for an invitation:

- **It's nice of you to ask** me to your barbecue this evening. I'd like to come very much.
- **It's nice of you to ask** my wife and me to your party, but we won't be able to come. We are going away for the weekend.

#### Language Help

You can also say **it's kind of you to ask ...** or **it's good of you to ask ...**:

- **It's kind of you to ask** us to go sailing with you.

### can

#### can you come?

You say **can you come?** when you want to know if someone is able to accept an invitation to something:

- We're having an end-of-term party tomorrow night. **Can you come?**
- Some of us are going to the pop concert tonight and we've got some extra tickets. **Can you come?**

## fancy

### do you fancy coming?

This is an informal way of inviting someone to something:

- I've got some free tickets for tonight's pop concert. **Do you fancy coming?**
- We're having a barbecue on the beach this evening. **Do you fancy coming?**

## how

### how about coming?

This is an informal way of inviting someone to something:

- We're having a party to celebrate the end of term. **How about coming?**
- Some of us are going sailing tomorrow. **How about coming?**

## invite (n)

### thanks for the invite

You say **thanks for the invite** when you thank someone informally for inviting you to something since the word **invite** is an informal form of **invitation**:

- 'Would you like to come to the beach with us tomorrow?'  
'**Thanks for the invite**, but I'm working tomorrow.'
- 'We're going camping this weekend. Would you like to join us?'  
'**Thanks for the invite!** I'd love to go camping.'

### Language Help

The more formal form is **thanks** or **thank you for the invitation**.

## invite (v)

### you're invited

You say **you're invited** as a way of inviting someone to something:

- Lucy's having a fireworks party tomorrow night and **you're invited**.
- My brother's having a party tonight and **we're both invited**.

### Language Help

**You are invited to** is often used in written invitations:

- **You are invited to** the wedding of Lucy Jones and Frank Wilson.

## like

### would you like to come?

You say **would you like to come?** when you ask or invite someone to something:

- We're going hill-walking tomorrow. **Would you like to come?**
- I'm booking theatre tickets for the family for next week. **Would you like to come?**

## love

### I'd love to come/I'd love to come, but ...

You say **I'd love to come** when you receive an invitation which you would like to accept. If you are unable to accept it for some reason, the expression is often followed by **but**:

- 'We're going on a trip to the zoo tomorrow. Would you like to join us?'  
'**I'd love to come**. What time are you leaving?'



- 'I've got two tickets for the play at the Lyceum tomorrow evening. Would you like to come with me?'

*'I'd love to come, but I have to work late tomorrow evening.'*

## make

### we won't be able to make it

You use **I** or **we won't be able to make it** as a fairly informal way of saying that you cannot accept an invitation to something:

- Thanks for us inviting us to your barbecue, but **we won't be able to make it**. Unfortunately we can't get a babysitter.
- Thanks for asking me to your party, but **I won't be able to make it**. I'm going away for the weekend.

### Language Help

You also say **I** or **we can't make it**.

## rain

### I'll have to take a rain check on it

You say **I'll have to take a rain check on it** in an informal context when you have to refuse an invitation to something but want to show that you would like to be invited to something similar at a later date:

- I can't meet you for a drink tonight because I'm working late. **I'll have to take a rain check on it**.
- It's kind of you to invite me to your drinks party on Saturday, but **I'll have to take a rain check on it**. I've promised to go out for dinner with some friends.

### Language Help

This phrase originated in American English but is now fairly common in British English also. It exists in various constructions, such as **I'll take a rain check on it** and **do you mind if I take a rain check on it?**

## turn

### turn something down

You **turn down an invitation** when you cannot, or do not want accept it. It has the same meaning as **refuse an invitation**:

- It is kind of you to invite me to the concert but I'm afraid I'm going to have **turn down the invitation**. I have a driving lesson that evening.
- Thank you for asking me to dinner next week, but, unfortunately, I'm going to have to **turn down the invitation**. I'll be on holiday then.
- I was asked to attend the charity ball but I had to **refuse the invitation**. It's in a month's time and I'll be away at a conference.

## want

### do you want to come?

You say **do you want to come?** as a way of inviting someone to something:

- My dad's organizing a fireworks party for next Saturday. **Do you want to come?**
- We're having a barbecue on the beach this evening. **Do you want to come?**

### Exercise 13

Answer the following questions.

**A** Insert the word missing from each expression below.

- 1 I'd like to **take you** \_\_\_\_\_ **on your invitation**.
- 2 I'm sorry. I'm going to have to **turn** \_\_\_\_\_ **your invitation**.
- 3 Thanks for inviting us to your barbecue, but **we won't be able to** \_\_\_\_\_ **it**.
- 4 Thanks for asking me to the lunch party. **I'd love to come**, \_\_\_\_\_ **I have another engagement**.
- 5 I have an extra ticket for the opera tomorrow evening. **Would you** \_\_\_\_\_ **to come?**

**B** Write down an informal form of the word **invitation**.

---

**C** Write down two expressions which are opposite in meaning to **accept an invitation** and use one of these in a sentence.

---

---

---

**D** **It's nice of you to ask me** is used as a way of thanking someone politely for an invitation. Write down two other expressions that are used in the same way and use one of them in a sentence.

---

---

---

**E** In what situation would you use **do you mind if I take a rain check on it?**

---

*News that Jean was moving to a new flat and that she needed help had travelled.*

'I hear you're moving into your new flat on Friday, Jean,' said Bob. **'Would you like a hand?'**

**'That's very kind of you, Bob,'** replied Jean. **'I appreciate your offer.'** Some other friends have already offered to help with the move, but the more people there are, the quicker we'll get it done.'

Next, Jean met Jim, who said, 'Bob told me you're moving house on Friday. **Can I give you a hand?'**

**'That's very nice of you, Jim,'** said Jean. 'I've got quite a few people helping already, but there's a lot of stuff to move, including some heavy furniture. I'll see you on Friday.'

Jean had decided to move some of the smaller things gradually by car. As she was taking some boxes out of the car boot, a man came out of the next car and said, 'Hello, Jean! **Can I help?'** It was Mike from one of the other flats in the block. He had met Jean when she had come to look round her flat before buying it.

'Yes, please, Mike,' replied Jean. **'Could you carry this box of china, please?'**

'Certainly,' said Mike. **'Let me help with that bag of books as well.'**

Just then John, who shared a flat with Mike, came along. 'You two have a lot to carry. **Is there anything I can do?'**' he asked. Just as he was saying this he was joined by Harry, their other flatmate, who said, **'Need any help?'**

'Thanks, you two. **Could you take those plants from the back seat of the car into the flat for me, please?'**

When they came back out of the flat they saw Mr Jones, rather an elderly gentleman who lived with his wife in one of the ground-floor flats. **'Can I be of any assistance?'** he asked.

'That's very kind of you, Mr Jones, but I think we've got everything unpacked now,' said Jean.

'Then I'll **make myself useful** by making some tea,' said Mr Jones.



'Thank you, Mr Jones!' said Jean. 'That would be lovely!'

They had some tea and Jean went back home to get ready for Friday's move, saying, 'Thanks for your help, everyone!'

## Useful Expressions

### anything is there anything I can do?

You say **is there anything I can do?** when you are asking someone if you can help them in some way, especially if they appear to be having difficulties or be in trouble:

- 'You look very worried, Mary? **Is there anything I can do?**'  
'No, thanks, Jim. I thought I'd missed the bus, but I see it coming now.'
- 'Has your car broken down? **Is there anything I can do?**'  
'No, thanks, but it's kind of you to ask. I'm waiting for the repair man.'

### appreciate I appreciate your offer

You say **I appreciate your offer** to show that you are grateful when someone offers to help you even if you do not accept the offer:

- 'I can give you a lift to the station in the morning, if you like.'  
'Thanks, Bill. **I appreciate your offer** and I'd like to take you up on it, if I may.'
- 'If you need to borrow a car tomorrow, I could lend you mine.'  
'Thanks, Peter. **I appreciate your offer**, but my father says that I can have his.'
- 'I hear you've hurt your ankle, Mary. Would you like me to walk the dog for you?'

'Thanks, Jane. **I appreciate your offer**, but my brother is looking after the dog until my ankle is better.'

### Language Help

If the offer of help is accepted, a common way of expressing this is to say **I'd like to take you up on your offer**:

- Dad, I appreciate your offer to lend me some money to get my business started. **I'd like to take you up on your offer**, but only until my loan comes through from the bank.

The expression **take you up on** (something) is also used with reference to an invitation to mean the invitation is accepted:

- I'm sorry. I'm not in a position to **take you up on your invitation**.

### assistance can I be of any assistance?

You say **can I be of any assistance?** when you are offering to help someone in some way. It is more formal than **can I help you?**:

- 'You look lost. **Can I be of any assistance?**'  
'Yes, please. Can you tell us how to get to the railway station?'
- 'Is there something wrong with your foot? **Can I be of any assistance?**'  
'No, thank you. I've broken the heel of my shoe, but my husband has gone to get the car.'

## could

### could you carry/take ...?

You often say **could you carry** or **take** (something)? when someone offers to help you with something:

- Thanks for offering to help, Jim. **Could you carry** these books for me?
- I'd love some help, Lucy. **Could you take** this suitcase out to the car for me, please?

#### Language Help

You also say **can you help with ...?**

- **Can you help with** this desk? I can't move it by myself.

## hand

### can I give you a hand?

You say **can I give you a hand?** when you are offering to help someone, especially with some form of physical work. It is slightly more informal than **can I help you?**:

- You seem to be carrying a lot of shopping, Mrs Brown. **Can I give you a hand?**
- Cooking for so many people is a lot of work. **Can I give you a hand?**

#### Language Help

You can also say **can I lend a hand?**:

- It's going to take you a long time to dig that garden. **Can I lend a hand?**

Other constructions based on the expression include **would you like a hand?** or **would you like a hand with ...?** and **do you need a hand?** or **do you need a hand with ...?**:

- **Would you like a hand** to move that furniture?
- **Would you like a hand with** the washing up?
- **Do you need a hand** to pick the apples?
- **Do you need a hand with** the cooking?

## help

### can I help?

You say **can I help?** when you are offering to help someone, especially someone who seems to be having difficulties of some kind or be in some kind of trouble:

- I saw you fall over. **Can I help?**
- That suitcase looks very heavy. **Can I help?**

#### Language Help

You can also say **can I be of any help?**

- Have you lost your way? **Can I be of any help?**

You use **how can I help?** when you want to know in what way you can help someone:

- I hear you're looking for some information about your family. **How can I help?**

### let me help with ...

You say **let me help with ...** when you are offering to help someone with something, often to take/carry, etc, something:

- That box looks very heavy. **Let me help with** it.
- That sofa is too heavy for one person. **Let me help with** it.

#### Language Help

You can also say **let me carry ...** or **let me take ...**:

- That box of books looks very heavy. **Let me carry** it.

### need any help?

You say **need any help?** in an informal context when you want to know if you can help someone:

- You've got a lot of dishes to wash. **Need any help?**
- There are quite a few people waiting for food. **Need any help?**

### Language Help

A more formal way of saying this is **do you need any help?**

### thanks for your help

You say **thanks for your help** or **thank you for your help** when you wish to thank someone for helping you:

- *That's the washing up finished. **Thanks for your help!***
- *It was kind of you to help me arrange the flowers for the wedding. **Thanks for your help!***

### kind

#### that's very kind of you

You say **that's very kind of you** when someone offers to help you:

- *'Can I help you carry those heavy bags?'  
**'That's very kind of you. Could you take this one?'***
- *'I see your car has broken down. Can I help you?'  
**'That's very kind of you, but my husband has gone to fetch a mechanic from the local garage.'***

### Language Help

You can also use **that's very nice of you** the same way:

- *'Can I help you put those books away?'  
**'That's very nice of you. These go in those shelves over there.'***

### useful

#### I'll make myself useful

You say **I'll make myself useful** when you're going to help someone:

- ***I'll make myself useful** by putting away these dishes.*
- ***I'll make myself useful** by taking the dog for a walk.*

### Language Help

You can say **how can I make myself useful?** when you want to know in what way you can help:

- ***I've come to help with the party arrangements. How can I make myself useful?***



## Exercise 14

Answer the following questions.

- A** Give an expression which sounds similar to **can I give you a hand?** and means the same.
- 

- B** What is a more formal form of the expression **need any help?**
- 

- C** What expression from the passage would you use to thank someone for their help?
- 

- D** Insert the word missing from each expression below.

- 1 *How can I make myself \_\_\_\_\_ ?*
- 2 *Can I be of \_\_\_\_\_ ?*
- 3 *Would you like a hand \_\_\_\_\_ those heavy bags?*
- 4 *I \_\_\_\_\_ your offer, but I don't need any assistance, thank you.*
- 5 *You seemed to hurt your ankle when you fell. Is there \_\_\_\_\_ I can do?*

*Mary had been sent by her school to do two weeks' work experience at Brown and Jackson, a firm of accountants. It was a large firm and she was very nervous when she first arrived.*

She was so nervous that she was rather confused about where she was supposed to sit in the large open-plan office.

'**May I** sit here?' Mary asked the girl sitting next to the desk which she thought was the one which had been pointed out to her.

'Yes, of course! This is your desk for the next two weeks.'

Mary sat down and switched on the computer ready to begin work, but it wasn't a system she was used to. She couldn't find any instruction manual on her desk, but there was one on the next desk.

'I'm sorry to interrupt you again, but **could I possibly** borrow your computer manual? I'm not used to this system.'

'**Be my guest!**' said the girl, whose name was Sara. 'If you have any difficulty with it just ask me.'

Mary soon was able to use the computer, but she began to feel very hot. '**Can I** open that window?' she asked Sara.

'I'm sorry, but **you'd better not,**' replied Sara. 'When that window is open there's a draught and all the papers blow around.'

Mary saw that there was a desk fan beside her desk and asked Sara, '**Would it be all right** if I switched on the fan, then? I'm very hot.'

'Yes, **feel free** to switch it on whenever you like! It does get very hot in here with all these people, but you get used to it after a while.'

Mary was so hot that she began to feel very thirsty. She said to Sara, 'I noticed a coffee machine in the hall. **Are we allowed to** use it?'

'Yes, **go ahead**, but **we're not allowed to** bring the coffee back to our desks in case it gets spilt over important documents. Come to think of it, I hope you don't smoke because **they don't let us** smoke anywhere in the building. We have to go outside and that's not very pleasant.'

Mary said that she didn't smoke and went back to work, hoping that she would soon become familiar with what she could and could not do.

## Useful Expressions

### ahead

#### go ahead

You say **go ahead** when you are giving permission to someone to do something or telling them that they are allowed to do something:

- 'May I use this computer?'  
'**Go ahead!** It's a spare one.'
- 'Can I borrow this dictionary?'  
'**Go ahead!** It's for office use.'

### allow

#### are we allowed to ...?

You say **are we allowed to** do something? when you want to know if there is any rule why you should not do something:

- **Are we allowed to** go into this part of the building?
- **Are we allowed to** use the school library at weekends?

#### we're not allowed to ...

You say **we're not allowed to** do something when there is a rule why people should not do something:

- **We're not allowed to** walk on the grass in the park.
- **We're not allowed to** wear jeans to school. We have to wear school uniform.

### all right

#### would it be all right if ...?

You ask **would it be all right if** you did something? when you are asking if you are allowed to do something or when you are asking permission to do something, especially something that you think might interrupt, disturb or annoy someone:

- **Would it be all right if** I borrowed this book?
- **Would it be all right if** I closed this door?

#### Language Help

You can also use **do you mind if ...?** in this way:

- **Do you mind if** I switch on the electric fire?

### better

#### you'd better not

You say **you'd better not** when someone has asked permission to do something and you are telling them that they should not do it:

- 'May I use this computer?'  
'**You'd better not.** It belongs to Mary and she doesn't like other people using it.'
- 'Can I open this door? It's very hot in here.'  
'**You'd better not.** It's a fire door and it should be kept shut all the time.'



## can

### can I ...?

You say **can I** do something? when you are asking permission to do something:

- **'Can I sit here?'**  
'No. I'm sorry but the seats in this part of the train are all reserved.'
- **Can I take one of these leaflets?**

#### Language Help

The expression **may I ...?** (see below) is a more polite form to use for the same purpose.

## could

### could I possibly ...?

You say **could I possibly** or **could I** do something? when you are asking permission to do something. The expression **could I possibly** do something? is a more polite form of the two expressions:

- **Could I borrow this pen, please?**
- **Could I possibly borrow your lecture notes? I missed the lecture because I was ill.**

## free

### feel free to ...

You say **feel free to** do something when someone asks permission to do something and you are telling them that they do not have to ask permission in future:

- **'May I borrow your dictionary?'**  
'Certainly. **Feel free to** borrow it whenever you want.'
- **'Can I use the photocopier?'**  
'Of course! **Feel free to** use it whenever you need to.'

## guest

### be my guest!

You say **be my guest!** in an informal context when you are giving someone permission to borrow or use something, especially something that belongs to you:

- **'Could I borrow this pencil?'**  
'Certainly! **Be my guest!**'
- **'Can I use this cup?'**  
'Of course! **Be my guest!**'

## let

### they don't let us

You say **they don't let us** do something when there is a rule or regulation which states that people should not do something:

- **They don't let us** into the school laboratory unless there's a teacher there.
- **They don't let us** into the office building before 8 am.

## may

### may I ...?

You say **may I** do something? when you are asking permission to do something. It is a more polite expression than **can I** do something?:

- **'May I have a look at the map?'**  
'Certainly! Here it is!'
- **'May I borrow the telephone directory, please?'**  
'Yes, certainly.'

## Exercise 15

Answer the following questions.

- A** Write down an expression which is a more polite form of **can I?** and show how it is used.

---

---

- B** Write down an expression from the passage which is used in the same way as **do you mind if I** turn down the heating?.

---

- C** What informal expression from the passage would you use when giving someone permission to borrow or use something that belongs to you?

---

- D** Insert the word missing from each expression below.

1 'Can I use this chair?'

'Yes, **go** \_\_\_\_\_ ! No one else needs it.'

2 'Would it be all right if I listened to the radio?'

'Yes, \_\_\_\_\_ **free to** use it when you wish.'

3 'Could I borrow this mug?'

'**You'd** \_\_\_\_\_ **not**. It belongs to Mary and she doesn't like people using her things.'

- E** What expression in the passage indicates that there is a rule of some kind which prevents people from doing something?

---

*John and Anne were going to visit Anne's aunt, who had just retired to a country cottage. They weren't familiar with that part of the country and they had got lost.*

'Why don't you ask that woman over there for directions?' said Anne as they passed through the same little town for about the third time.

John called, 'Excuse me! **Can you give us directions to** Rose Cottage? It's supposed to be about three miles from here, behind the town.'

'I'm sorry but I can't help you,' said the woman. '**I'm a stranger here.** I'm visiting a friend in the next town.'

'Thank you very much, anyway,' said John and looked around for someone else to ask. Unfortunately, it was quite early on a Sunday morning and there were not many people around.

'Look!' said John. 'There's a man walking his dog. It's your turn to **ask the way.**'

Anne got out of the car and said to the man, '**Can you tell me the way to** Rose Cottage? It's situated about three miles behind the town, but we simply can't find it. **We're lost.**'

'Rose Cottage, you say,' said the man. 'Sorry. I've never heard of it; I just came to live here a few weeks ago.'

Suddenly another man with a dog appeared. 'Excuse me!' said Anne. '**Could you direct us to** Rose Cottage?'

'Sorry. I don't live here,' replied the man. 'I can't help you, I'm afraid. Why don't you ask at the village shop? It's just over there behind the church. Someone there should be able to **show you the way.**'

John and Anne took his advice. '**Can you tell us how to get to** Rose Cottage?' asked John. '**We've lost our way.**'

'I'm sorry. I can't, but the owner's in the back of the shop. She'll know.'



The shop owner, Mrs Jones, was, indeed, able to give them directions. 'Go straight on through the town and **turn left** at the white cottage called Bell Cottage. Then **drive straight on** until you come to a **crossroads**. Turn left there and drive on for about half a mile until you come to a farm called Whitecraigs. **Turn right** at the farm gate and Rose Cottage is at the end of the lane.'

Eventually they arrived at Anne's aunt's cottage several hours late!

## Useful Expressions

### ask

#### ask someone the way

You **ask someone the way** when you ask someone how to get somewhere:

- *I don't know how to get to the railway station. I'm going to have to **ask someone the way**.*
- *I can't see the village on this map. I'll have to stop and **ask someone the way**.*

#### Language Help

You can also use **ask someone for directions** with the same meaning:

- *We couldn't find the hotel, but we **asked a policeman for directions**.*

### crossroads

A **crossroads** is a place where two roads meet and cross each other:

- *We didn't know whether to turn right at the **crossroads** or to go straight on.*
- *There was no signpost at the **crossroads** and we turned left instead of right by mistake.*

#### Language Help

A **roundabout** is a place that is a circular area where several roads meet. Drivers drive round it in the same direction to find the road they want:

- *You take the first turn left at the **roundabout**.*
- *Go straight on at the **roundabout**.*

### direct

#### could you direct us to ...?

You say to someone **could you direct us to** somewhere? when you want them to tell you how to get somewhere:

- ***Could you direct us to** the railway station, please?*
- ***Could you direct us to** Rose Lane, please?*

### direction

#### can you give us directions to ...?

You say to someone **can you give us directions to** somewhere? when you want them to tell you how to get there:

- *We're looking for a hotel called the White House. **Can you give us directions to it?***
- ***Can you give us directions to** the bus station?*

## go ...

When you are giving directions to someone you often use the imperative and so you use words such as **go**, **drive** and **turn**:

- **Go** across the bridge.
- **Drive** along the main street.
- **Turn left** along Forth Street at the end of the town.
- **Turn right** at the crossroads.

## lose

### lose your way

When you **lose your way** you do not know where you are or you cannot find the way to where you want to be:

- A thick mist came down on the mountain and **we lost our way**.
- **We lost our way**, but, fortunately, we had a road map in the car.

## lost

### we're lost

You say **we're lost** when you and a companion do not know where you are or cannot find the way to where you want to be:

- **We're lost**. Where's the map?
- **We're lost**. We're going to have to stop and ask someone for directions.

## straight

### straight on

If you go **straight on** you do not turn right or left but go in a straight line:

- We turned right when we should have gone **straight on**.
- Drive **straight on** through the town.

## stranger

### I'm a stranger here

You say **I'm a stranger here** when you are unfamiliar with a place and someone has asked you for directions:

- I'm sorry. I can't tell you how to get to the railway station. **I'm a stranger here**.
- I'm sorry. I can't give you directions. **I'm a stranger here**.

## take ...

When you are giving someone directions you often say **take** instead of **go**, **drive** or **turn**:

- **Take** the first road to your left as you leave the town.
- **Take** the second left turn at the roundabout.

## tell

### can you tell us how to get to ...?

You say **can you tell us how to get to** somewhere? when you cannot find the way to where you want to be and are asking for directions:

- **Can you tell us how to get to** the airport?
- We're looking for Blackford Castle. **Can you tell us how to get to it?**

## way

### tell someone the way to ...

If you **tell someone the way to** somewhere you tell them how to get to where they want to go:

- I couldn't find the castle, but someone in the tourist office **told me the way to** it.
- One of the nurses **told us the way to** the ward where my mother was.

### Language Help

You can also say **tell someone how to get to ...**

- The policeman **told us how to get to** the railway station.

## Exercise 16

Answer the following questions.

**A** What is a **roundabout**?

---

---

**B** If you don't turn left and you don't turn right what direction do you go?

---

**C** Why is a **crossroads** so called?

---

**D** Under what circumstances would you use **I'm a stranger here**?

---

**E** When you are giving directions, what verb would you usually use instead of **go** or **drive**?

---

**F** Insert the word missing from each expression below.

- 1 **We've lost our** \_\_\_\_\_. *Is there a map in the car?*
- 2 **Could you give us** \_\_\_\_\_ **to** the hospital? *My friend has hurt himself.*
- 3 **We did** \_\_\_\_\_ **someone the way** but he directed us wrongly.



*Jack was due to go on holiday the next day to visit his sister Meg and her family at their beach holiday house. It was a beautiful place and it usually had a very pleasant climate.*

'Hello, Meg,' he said. 'I hope to be with you about lunchtime tomorrow, as arranged. **What's the weather like?** I hope the sun is shining.'

'Hello, Jack!' said Meg. 'We're looking forward to seeing you! **It's been unsettled** this week and it was **cloudy** and **rainy** at the end of last week, but **it's a beautiful day** today. The good news is that **the weather forecast says** that it's going to be **fine** for the next few days and it's going to be warm.'

'That's good!' said Jack. 'I'm longing for some sunshine.'

'Why?' asked Meg. '**How's the weather** there?'

'It's cold and it's **wet**,' replied Jack. 'In fact, it's like winter rather than summer. **According to the forecast**, this weather's to continue, too. I'm glad I'm getting away.'

'Well,' said Meg, 'the weather's not so nice here as it usually is. When I and the kids arrived it was very hot, but **it was very humid** and so it wasn't at all pleasant. Then we had one or two really bad **thunderstorms** and that cleared the air a bit.'

'We had some sunshine here at the beginning of the month,' said Jack. 'Then it got really **foggy** and there were two or three bad car accidents on the motorway. Since then **it's poured with rain** most days and **it's freezing!** I've even had to have the central heating on—and it's mid-summer! I've given up **listening to the weather forecast** because it's so depressing! They can say what they like about **global warming**, but it's not getting any warmer here—although it's getting wetter.'

'I think it might be affecting this part of the world,' said Meg. 'It does seem to be a bit hotter than usual, but it's also a lot more humid and wetter, which isn't so good. We've noticed that the weather isn't as reliable as it was when we first bought this place.'

'It's bound to be better than it is here!' said Jack. 'I must go and pack. I'll see you tomorrow!'

## Useful Expressions

### beautiful a beautiful day

You say that **it's a beautiful day** when it is dry, warm and sunny:

- *It was a **beautiful day** and so we took the children to the zoo.*
- *Sara and Jim got a **beautiful day** for their wedding.*

### cloudy

You say that the weather is **cloudy** when the sky is full of grey clouds, it is quite dark and it looks as though it might rain:

- *We got a **cloudy day** for the children's picnic, but it didn't actually rain.*
- *It was **cloudy** in the morning and it was raining heavily by evening.*

### fine

You say that the weather is **fine** when it is dry and bright:

- *It wasn't a very warm day, but it was **fine**.*
- *It was **fine** in the morning, but it began to rain in the afternoon.*

### foggy

When the weather is **foggy** it is not clear and it is difficult to see properly because of a cloud of very small drops of water over the land or sea:

- *It was very **foggy** and the driver could hardly see the road in front of him*
- *The people on the ship did not see the boat because it was very **foggy**.*

### forecast according to the forecast

When you say **according to the forecast** you mean that you are basing your remarks on the weather on the radio or television reports that say what the weather is expected to be like:

- ***According to the (weather) forecast**, it's going to be a fine day.*
- ***According to the (weather) forecast**, it will be fine this afternoon.*

### freezing

The word **freezing** is used informally to mean that it is very cold:

- *It's **freezing** in this house today because the central heating has broken down.*
- *It was **freezing** when we got up in the morning but it got a bit warmer later in the day.*

#### Language Help

The word **freezing** can also mean having temperatures below freezing point.

### humid

When the weather is **humid** the air feels warm and wet:

- *The area has a warm climate, but it is usually **humid** and so is not very pleasant.*
- *We all felt very tired as it was a hot, very **humid** day.*

### rain it pours with rain

When **it pours with rain** it rains heavily:

- *It **poured with rain** the morning of the picnic and we had to cancel it.*

- We hope **it doesn't pour with rain** on the day of the wedding.
- **How's the weather** in that part of the world at this time of year?
- **How's the weather** there just now? Will I need to take along a waterproof jacket?

## rainy

You say it's **rainy** when it rains a lot:

- It was a **rainy** day and we were all carrying umbrellas.
- It was **rainy** all day, but it was dry in the evening.

## thunderstorm

A **thunderstorm** is a storm in which there is thunder and lightning and, usually, heavy rain:

- We sheltered from the **thunderstorm** in a barn.
- The children were frightened by the noise of the **thunderstorm**.

## unsettled

When the weather is **unsettled** it keeps changing within quite a short period of time:

- During the past week the weather has been very **unsettled**.
- It's usually warm and dry at this time of year here, but recently the weather has been **unsettled** and we've had quite a lot of rain.

## warming

### global warming

**Global warming** is a gradual increase in the world's temperatures.

## weather

### how's the weather?

You ask **how's the weather?** when you want to know whether it is sunny, rainy, warm or cold, etc:

## what's the weather like?

You ask **what's the weather like?** when you want to know whether it is sunny, rainy, warm or cold, etc:

- **What's the weather like** there at this time of year?
- **What's the weather like** there just now? Will I need to take a warm sweater with me?

### Language Help

You can also ask **what kind of weather is it?**:

- **What kind of weather is it** with you today? I was wondering what to wear.

## weather forecast

### listen to the weather forecast

When you **listen to the weather forecast** you listen to one of the regular radio or television reports that say what the weather is expected to be like.

## wet

When the weather is **wet** it rains a lot:

- The area has warm, dry summers and cold, **wet** winters.
- It looks as though it's going to be **wet** today. You'd better take an umbrella.



## Exercise 17

Answer the following questions.

**A** The word **freezing** can refer to temperatures which are below freezing point. What else can it mean when it is used informally?

---

**B** How does the air feel when it's **humid**?

---

**C** How do you describe weather that is dry and bright?

---

**D** Give two expressions which have the same meaning as **what kind of weather is it?**

---

**E** Give two adjectives which describe the weather when it rains a lot.

---

---

**F** When the weather changes a lot within a short period of time you can describe it as "changeable". What adjective from the passage could you also use?

---

**G** How might you find out what kind of weather it is going to be?

---

**H** What verb in the passage is associated with heavy rain?

---

*Jim and Anne were going out for dinner to celebrate their wedding anniversary. The restaurant to which they were going was a very popular one and so Jim **had booked a table** some days before.*

When they got to the restaurant one of the waiters took their coats, having first asked Jim, '**Have you made a reservation**, sir?'

Jim replied that he had done so and the waiter led them to their table. '**Here is** the menu. The **table d'hôte** section is at the front and the **a la carte** section is at the back. There are some **specials** on the blackboard. **Would you like** to see the wine list?'

'Yes, please,' said Jim as they began to study the menu. They decided to choose from the a la carte section of the menu as it was considerably cheaper than the table d'hôte and, in any case, offered a wide choice.

As they were looking at the wine list the waiter returned to ask, 'Would you like a drink before dinner?'

'No, thank you,' said Jim. '**We'll just order** some wine, but could you bring it right away? We'll have some before we eat.'

The waiter brought the bottle of dry white wine which Jim had ordered and said, 'Would you like to taste the wine?' Anne said that she would and the waiter poured a small amount into her glass. 'That's very nice,' said Anne and the waiter filled both their glasses.

Then he asked, '**Are you ready to order** or would you like a few more minutes?'

Jim and Anne said that they were ready to order. Anne said, '**I would like** the asparagus to start with and then the salmon.'

Jim said, '**I'll have** the melon and the swordfish, please.'

They both found the food delicious and filling and when the waiter asked, 'Would you like to see the dessert menu?' they had to say 'no'.

'**Can I get you** some coffee, then—or something else to drink?' he asked.

Jim said, 'We won't have anything else, thank you. Could we have the bill, please, and could you order a taxi for us? It seems to be raining heavily.'

The waiter returned with the bill. Jim paid it with his credit card and they both thanked him. It had been a very enjoyable evening.

## Useful Expressions

### bill

#### could we have the bill, please?

You say **could we have the bill, please?** at the end of a meal when you are ready to pay:

- *No, we won't have any coffee, thank you. **Could we have the bill?***
- ***Could we have the bill, please?** We're in a hurry.*

#### Language Help

You can also say **can we have the bill, please?**

In American English it is common to say **can we have the check, please?** and this is occasionally found in British English also:

- *We don't want anything else, thank you. **Can we have the check?***

It is quite common, especially in a busy, noisy restaurant, for someone who wishes to have the bill to pretend to be writing something in the air to let the waiter know what they want.

### can

#### can I get you ...?

Waiters in restaurants often say **can I get you ...?** or **can I bring you ...?** when they are asking you if you want something:

- ***Can I get you some more coffee?***

- ***Can I bring you some more bread?***

### carte

#### a la carte

On an **a la carte** menu there is a large list of dishes in which each dish is priced separately:

- *I just want a main course and I'll choose it from the **a la carte**.*
- *We usually have the table d'hôte menu but we're celebrating tonight and so we're going to have the **a la carte**. It's more expensive to order from it but it gives us much more choice.*

### else

#### we won't have anything else, thank you

You say **we won't have anything else, thank you** in a restaurant when you have had enough to eat and drink and do not want to order any more:

- ***We won't have anything else, thank you. Could we have the bill, please?***
- *That was a delicious meal, but **we won't have anything else, thank you.***

### have

#### I'll have ...

You say **I'll have ...** in a restaurant when you are telling the waiter what you want to eat and drink:



- *I'll **have** the soup and the chicken, please.*
- *I'll just **have** the vegetable lasagne and a mixed salad, please.*

## here

### here is ...

Waiters in restaurants often say **here is ...** when they are handing you something:

- ***Here is** the wine list, sir.*
- ***Here is** the list of desserts.*

#### Language Help

They also use **this is ...** in the same way:

- ***This is** the a la carte menu, sir.*
- ***This is** the monkfish.*

## like

### I would like ...

You say **I would like ...** in a restaurant when you are telling the waiter what you want to eat and drink:

- ***I would like** the stuffed mushrooms followed by the monkfish, please.*
- ***I would like** the vegetable soup and the beef stew, please.*

### would you like ...?

Waiters in restaurants say **would you like ...?** when they are asking you if you want something:

- ***Would you like** a drink before dinner?*
- ***Would you like** some bread?*
- ***Would you like** to see the wine list?*
- ***Would you like** to have a look at the dessert menu?*

## order

### are you ready to order?

Waiters in restaurants say **are you ready to order?** when they want to know if you have decided what you want to eat and drink:

- ***Are you ready to order?** What would you like?*
- ***Are you ready to order** or would you like a few more minutes to decide?*

### could you order a taxi?

You say **could you order a taxi?** if you want someone in the restaurant to telephone a taxi firm and send a taxi for you:

- *It's raining heavily. **Could you order a taxi** for us?*
- ***Could you order a taxi?** We're going to Bridge Street.*

## reservation

### make a reservation

You **make a reservation** when you ring a restaurant before you go and tell them what day and time you would like to have a meal there:

- *The restaurant is always busy on Saturday nights. We had better **make a reservation**.*
- *It's my wife's birthday on Friday. I'm going to ring the new French restaurant and **make a reservation** for dinner.*

#### Language Help

Waiters often ask you if you have made a reservation by saying **Do you have a reservation?**

- *Good evening. **Do you have a reservation?***

You can also use **make a reservation** in a similar way in connection with a hotel room, a seat on a plane, etc:

- *I tried to **make a reservation** for this evening's flight to New York, but it's full.*
- *You should ring and **make a reservation** right away if you want to stay at the hotel on the night of the wedding. It is bound to be very busy.*

A less formal expression meaning the same as **make a reservation** is **book a table**.

See below under **table**.

## special

A **special** in a restaurant is a dish which is available for one day only, sometimes at a cheaper price than usual:

- The **special** today is chicken with parsley sauce.
- The printed menu doesn't change here very often but there are always several **specials** on offer.

## table

### book a table

You **book a table** when you ring a restaurant before you go and tell them what day and time you would like to have a meal there:

- Please call up the restaurant and **book a table** for tonight at eight.
- To celebrate his promotion, Tom **has booked a table** for ten persons at the Chinese restaurant.

## Language Help

Waiters often ask you if you have made a reservation by saying **have you booked?**:

- We're full this evening, sir. **Have you booked?**

You can also use the word **book** in this way with reference to a seat on a train, a seat in a theatre, a hotel room, etc:

- I **booked** a single room here for tonight and tomorrow night.
- You should **book** a seat if you're going to travel on that train. It's always crowded.

A more formal expression meaning the same as **book a table** is **make a reservation**.

## table d'hôte

On a **table d'hôte** menu the meal costs a fixed price and there are only a limited number of dishes to choose from:

- It's quite an expensive restaurant, but the **table d'hôte** menu is very good value for money.
- The **table d'hôte** menu here doesn't offer a very wide choice. I think we should look at the a la carte one.

## Exercise 18

Answer the following questions.

- A** In a restaurant, what is the opposite of a **table d'hôte** menu?
- 
- B** With reference to dining in a restaurant, what is a less formal expression which means the same as **make a reservation**?
- 
- C** What is the American English equivalent of **could we have the bill, please?**
- 
- D** Rewrite each sentences, replacing the expression in colour with an expression from the passage that is similar in meaning:
- This is** the wine list.
- 
- I'll have** the sole and orange sauce.
- 
- Can I bring you** some water?
- 
- E** Insert the word missing from each expression below.
- We won't have anything** \_\_\_\_\_ , **thank you**.
  - Are your ready to** \_\_\_\_\_ or would you like some more time to read the menu?
  - Do you have a** \_\_\_\_\_ ? No? Then I'm afraid we cannot give you a table. We're full tonight.



*Anna had just returned from a holiday abroad to discover that her much-loved dog, Patch, had died in her absence. He was a very old dog and had died of a heart attack in his sleep. It had happened on the very last day of her holiday and Anna's parents had decided to wait until her return before they told her about the dog's death.*

After she had told her daughter the bad news about her pet, Anna's mother said, 'I'm **sorry** about Patch's death, Anna. I know how much you loved him, but at least he didn't suffer much pain before he died.'

Her father said, 'What a **pity** it was that Patch died when you were away and that you didn't get to say goodbye to him, but he was very old and his heart had become very weak.'

Several of Anna's friends and relatives came to **offer** her their **condolences**.

Her friend Pat came round right away to say, 'I'm **so sorry** to hear about Patch's death. I **feel for you**. As you know, my dog died last year and I haven't got over her death yet.'

Anna's friend Jean had something similar to say. 'You must be feeling terrible, Anna. I **can** really **sympathize with you**. I know how miserable I was when my cat died. I wept for days.'

'It was a **shame** that poor Patch died when you were away,' said Anna's sister, Amy, 'but I'm sure that Mum and Dad took very good care of him. Try not to grieve too much. He had a very happy life with you and he was very old.'

'What a **shame** it was that you weren't here when Patch died,' said Anna's brother, 'but there was nothing you could have done. At least he wasn't in pain before he died.'

'You **have my sympathy**, Anna,' said her Aunt Liz. 'Losing a pet is a terrible experience. I've lost three dogs now and I'm still sad about them all.'

Anna was grateful that everyone was being so sympathetic, but it didn't really help. Every time she looked at Patch's empty basket and dog collar she wanted to cry.

## Useful Expressions

### condolence

#### offer condolences

You **offer** someone **condolences** when someone they loved has died. It is a fairly formal expression and is found mostly in written English:

- *I was so sorry to hear of the death of your mother and I am writing to **offer** you my **condolences**.*
- *I would like to **offer** you my **condolences** on the death of your grandfather. He was a most remarkable man.*

### feel

#### I feel for you

You say **I feel for you** to show that you feel sympathy for someone, often when you have experienced a similar situation:

- ***I feel for you.** I know that having to have a dog put down is a very distressing experience.*
- *I hear you're waiting for a heart operation. **I feel for you.** I had the same operation last year. However, I'm quite well now and I'm sure that you will soon be well too.*

### pity

#### what a pity

You use **what a pity** when you want to say that something that has happened is unfortunate and that you feel sorry about it:

- ***What a pity** it is that Jim and Mary have got divorced. They have four children who are very upset.*
- ***What a pity** it was that my brother didn't get to the hospital in time to say goodbye to my grandfather before he died. He was very distressed about it and we all sympathized with him.*

### shame

#### what a shame

You say **what a shame** when you want to say that something that has happened is unfortunate and that you feel sorry about it:

- *I've just heard that Jim has broken his ankle. **What a shame!** He had just been chosen to play for the school football team.*
- ***What a shame!** Mike's car broke down on the way to the airport and he missed his flight.*

### sorry

#### I'm sorry

You say **I'm sorry** to someone when you feel sadness and sympathy for them because something bad has happened to them or because someone dear to them has died:

- ***I'm sorry** that you lost your job. I hope you soon find another one.*
- ***I'm sorry** to hear that your grandmother died. You must miss her very much.*

#### Language Help

**I'm so sorry** is a more emphatic form of this:

- ***I'm so sorry** to hear that your cat was run over. It's terrible to lose a pet.*
- ***I'm so sorry** to hear that you are in hospital. I hope you will recover soon.*

### sympathize

#### I sympathize with you

When you say **I sympathize with you** you mean that you understand how sad or hurt someone is feeling and feel sorry for them, often because you have had a similar experience:

- *It's terrible that you lost your job so suddenly. I **sympathize with you**. The same thing happened to me a few years ago.*
- *I hear that your house has been burgled. I **sympathize with you**. We were burgled last year and I still don't feel safe in the house.*

## **sympathy**

### **you have my sympathy**

When you say **you have my sympathy** you mean that you understand how sad or hurt

someone is feeling and feel sorry for them, often because you have had a similar experience:

- *Tom told me that you're having difficulty in finding a flat to rent here. **You have my sympathy**. I tried last year for ages without success. We eventually decided to move to the suburbs.*
- *I hear that you think that your boss is treating you unfairly because you are a woman. I **sympathize with you**, but if you're to complain about it, you must have proof.*



## Exercise 19

Answer the following questions.

**A** What expression in the passage means the same as **what a pity**?

---

**B** What is a more emphatic form of **I'm sorry**?

---

**C** Under what circumstances would you **offer** someone your **condolences**?

---

**D** Insert the word missing from each expression below.

- 1 Your sister told me that you are being bullied at work. **You have my** \_\_\_\_\_. I had to leave my last job because that happened to me.
- 2 I've heard that your landlord just refuses to do any repairs to your flat and I \_\_\_\_\_ **with you**. I had to take my landlord to court to get repairs done.
- 3 I know that you've just lost your mother and I \_\_\_\_\_ **for you**. My mother died two years ago and I still miss her.

*Lucy and Sue had decided to take a break from studying one evening to go and have some coffee. They had arranged to meet at their favourite high-street coffee bar.*

'You go and get a table and I'll order the coffee. It looks as though it's getting very busy,' said Sue. **'What are you going to have?'**

**'I'd like** a white coffee, thanks,' said Lucy.

**'Would you like anything to eat?'** asked Sue.

'No, thanks,' replied Lucy.

'Studying makes me hungry,' said Sue. **'I'll have** a chocolate muffin and a large black coffee to help keep me awake.'

Sue took a place in the queue at the counter and soon the assistant asked, **'What can I get you?'**

'I'll have one white coffee and one large black coffee, please,' said Sue.

**'To go or to stay?'** asked the assistant.

'To stay,' replied Sue.

**'Anything else?'** asked the assistant when she handed over the coffees.

'One chocolate muffin, please,' said Sue.

**'How much is that?'** asked Sue when the assistant brought the muffin.

**'That's \$12 exactly,'** said the assistant. When Sue had paid her she said, 'There's sugar on the tables if you want it. **Help yourself! Have a nice day!**

Sue carried the coffees to the table where Lucy was sitting.

'Thanks! **What do I owe you?'** Lucy asked.

**'Don't worry about it!'** replied Sue. 'You can pay the next time, if you like. I'm sure we'll be going out for lots of coffee while we're studying for our exams.'

They chatted while they drank their coffee and Sue asked Lucy, 'Would you like another one?'

'No, thanks,' said Lucy. 'I've had enough. I really must get back to my books.'

'So must I and there are people waiting for tables,' said Sue. 'We should go.'

Just then two women came up and said to Sue and Lucy, 'Are these seats taken?' indicating the two empty seats at their table.

'No. Please sit down,' said Lucy. 'In any case, we were just leaving.'

The two friends left the coffee bar and returned to their studies.

## Useful Expressions

### another

#### would you like another one?

You say **would you like another one?** when you are asking someone if they would like to have something like the thing that they have just eaten or drunk:

- *You've finished your glass of wine. **Would you like another one?***
- *'That was a delicious cake.'  
'**Would you like another one?**'*

### anything

#### anything else?

A waiter or shop assistant says **anything else?** when they want to know if you want to buy something else or if you are ready to pay for what you have bought:

- *'That's a black coffee and a piece of chocolate cake. **Anything else?**'  
'No, thank you. *That's all.*'*

### Language Help

Another form of this expression is **will there be anything else?**:

- ***Will there be anything else today?***

### day

#### have a nice day!

This expression is a conventional greeting used by shop assistants after they have served you. It is particularly common in American English, although it is now found occasionally in British English:

- *That's \$30 change. **Have a nice day!***
- *I hope you enjoyed your coffee. **Have a nice day!***

### enough

#### I've had enough

You say **I've had enough** when you do not want anything more to eat or drink:

- *'Would you like some more wine?'  
'No, thanks. **I've had enough.**'*



- 'Do you want another slice of cake?'  
'No, thank you. It was delicious, but I've had enough.'

## go to go

The expression **to go** means that you are going to take whatever food or drink you have bought away from the shop or restaurant and are not going to eat or drink it there:

- One white coffee **to go**, please.
- Two cheeseburgers **to go**, please.

### Language Help

The opposite of this is **to stay** (see below).

## have I'll have ...

You say **I'll have ...** in a restaurant, coffee bar, etc, when you are telling the waiter what you want to eat and drink:

- I'll have two beers, please.
- I'll have fish and chips, please.

## help help yourself!

A waiter or shop assistant says **help yourself!** when you have to give yourself some form of food or drink rather than being served with it:

- There is salad dressing on the counter.  
**Help yourself!**
- The salads are on that table over there.  
**Help yourself!**

## leave we were just leaving

In a restaurant, coffee bar, etc, you say **we were just leaving** when someone is looking for a table to sit at and you have just finished what you were eating or drinking and are ready to go:

- Please have this table. **We were just leaving.**
- Do sit here! **We were just leaving.**

## like I'd like ...

You say **I'd like ...** in a restaurant, coffee bar, etc, when you are telling the waiter what you want to eat and drink:

- I'd like two glasses of red wine, please.
- I'd like the salmon salad, please.

## much how much is that?

You say **how much is that?** when you ask someone how much money you need to pay them for what you have bought:

- We had two glasses of red wine and two beers. **How much is that?**
- Two white coffees and two slices of chocolate cake. **How much is that?**

### Language Help

The expression **what do I owe you?** (see below) has the same meaning:

A very informal expression **what's the damage?** also has the same meaning.

- We've had four glasses of white wine and two whiskies. **What's the damage?**

## owe what do I owe you?

You say **what do I owe you?** when you ask someone how much money you need to pay them for what you have bought:

- I don't want anything else today, thank you.  
**What do I owe you?**
- Thank you for repairing my bike so quickly.  
**What do I owe you?**

### Language Help

You also use **how much is that?** (see above) in this way:

- *I don't need anything else today, thank you.*  
**How much is that?**

### seat

#### are these seats taken?

You say **are these seats taken?** when you are in a restaurant, coffee bar, theatre, train, etc, are looking for somewhere to sit and see seats that appear to be empty or unused:

- **'Are these seats taken?'**  
'No. Please do sit down.'
- **'Are these seats taken?'**  
'Yes, I'm afraid they are. Our friends will be arriving very shortly.'

### stay

#### to stay

The expression **to stay** means that you are going to eat or drink whatever food or drink you have bought in the restaurant or shop:

- *I'd like a hamburger and French fries **to stay**.*
- *I want a bacon roll **to stay**, please.*

### that

#### that's ...

You say **that's ...** when you tell someone what something costs or how much the bill is:

- *Two coffees and two cakes. **That's** \$13, please.*
- *You've had two hamburgers and two mineral waters. **That's** \$17, please.*

### what

#### what are you going to have?

You say **what are you going to have?** when you ask someone what they want to eat or drink, especially in a restaurant, bar, etc:

- **'What are you going to have?'** *I think I'll have a glass of beer.*
- **'What are you going to have?'**  
'I'll just have a cheese salad. I'm not very hungry.'

#### what can I get you?

You say **what can I get you?** when you ask someone in a restaurant or bar what they want to buy, especially when you are a waiter, a shop assistant, etc:

- **'What can I get you?'**  
'Two glasses of red wine, please.'
- **'What can I get you?'**  
'Two cheese salads, please.'

### worry

#### don't worry about it!

You use **don't worry about it!** when you are telling someone not to bother paying the money which they owe you:

- *'Have you paid? What's my share of the bill?'*  
**'Don't worry about it!'** *It wasn't very much.'*
- *'Tell me how much the bill is.'*  
**'Don't worry about it!'** *You paid last time.'*

## Exercise 20

Answer the following questions.

**A** Replace the expression in colour in each sentence with an expression from the passage which has the same meaning.

1 We're going to have to leave now. **What's the damage?**

---

2 **I'll have** two teas and two slices of carrot cake.

---

**B** With reference to ordering food in a restaurant, what is the opposite of **to stay**?

---

**C** What conventional farewell greeting used by sales assistants is common in American English and also found occasionally in British English?

---

**D** What expression in the passage do you use when you are telling someone that they should serve themselves?

---

**E** Insert the word missing from each expression below.

1 Have these seats. **We were just** \_\_\_\_\_ .

2 If you've finished, let's get the bill. **I've had** \_\_\_\_\_ .

3 You've finished your coffee. **Would you like** \_\_\_\_\_ **one?**

4 There's your coffee. \_\_\_\_\_ **else?**



*The Jackson family were taking a holiday in the country. As soon as they had unpacked they all took a walk to explore the area.*

Peter, the youngest son, said excitedly, 'Look, there's a big pond! We can go swimming there!'

**You mustn't** go anywhere near that pond unless your dad or I or Ben is with you. Apparently, it's quite deep and you've only just learnt to swim,' said his mother.

Just then she saw her middle son, John, about to open a gate and called, '**Don't** do that, John!'

'I thought we could go down to the village through this field,' John called back.

**You can't** go through that field! There's young corn growing there and the farmer would be very annoyed. The people who rented the cottage to us told me that he doesn't allow strangers to wander over his property. Look at the sign on the gate! It says "**No trespassers!**"'

Mr Jackson said, 'The farmer certainly seems to want to keep people away. Look at the sign on the farm gate. This says "**Beware of the dog!**"'. Suddenly a large black dog appeared, barking loudly and scratching at the gate.

'Don't go near it!' called Mrs Jackson to Peter and John. 'It looks very fierce.'

'**Look out**, Mum!' called Lucy, the Jackson's only daughter. 'There's a tractor coming.'

By this time they had reached a wood and the two younger boys were climbing trees. '**Be careful**, boys!' called their mother. 'Don't climb up too far!'

'They'll be all right,' said their father. 'Playing here will do them good. They don't get much of a chance to play outside in the city.'

However, his wife was already calling to Lucy, '**Take care**, Lucy! Don't walk too close to the river bank. You might slip! And look! There's a sign saying "**Danger! Disused quarry!**" **Keep away from there!**'

Mrs Jackson was so busy worrying about all the accidents that her children might have in the country that she failed to hear the noise of an engine behind her.

**Watch out**, Mum!' called Ben. 'There's another tractor behind you!'

'Country life is meant to be peaceful, but I think it's too stressful for me,' said Mrs Jackson.

## Useful Expressions

### beware

#### beware of ...!

A sign saying **beware of** (something or someone)! is put there to warn people of the presence of something or someone that may hurt or harm them:

- *Don't go into that field! There is a sign on the gate saying '**Beware of** the bull!'.*
- *Hold on tight to your bag. There's a sign over there saying '**Beware of** pickpockets!'.*

#### Language Help

The sign **warning!** has a similar meaning:

- *The car driver did not see the sign saying '**Warning!** Roadworks ahead!'.*
- *There's a sign at the entrance to the building site saying '**Warning!** Lorries turning!'.*

### care

#### take care!

You say **take care!** when you are telling someone to act in a careful way and not do anything that is likely to be dangerous or risky:

- ***Take care!** The roads are very icy.*
- ***Take care!** People tend to drive very fast along that road.*

### careful

#### be careful!

This expression means the same as **take care!**:

- ***Be careful!** Don't walk too near to the edge of the cliff!*
- ***Be careful!** The garden path is very muddy and you might slip.*

### danger!

A sign saying **danger!** is put there to warn people of the presence of something or someone that may hurt or kill them:

- *This isn't a very safe path. There's a sign saying '**Danger!** Falling rocks!'.*
- *We'd better not swim here. There's a sign saying '**Danger!** Strong currents!'.*

### don't ...!

You say **don't ...!** to someone as a warning to them not to do something that may hurt or harm them:

- ***Don't** drive fast along there! It's a very narrow road.*
- ***Don't** swim there! The water isn't very clean.*

## keep

### keep away from ...!

You say **keep away from** (something)! to someone as a warning to them not to go near something that may hurt or harm them:

- **Keep away from** the edge of the cliff! You might fall over!
- **Keep away from** the barn! It's on fire!

## look

### look out!

You say **look out!** to someone as a warning to act carefully or to get out of the way in case they hurt or harm themselves:

- **Look out!** Don't step on that broken glass!
- **Look out!** This road's very icy!

## must

### you mustn't ...

You say **you mustn't ...** to someone as a warning to them not to do something that may hurt or harm them:

- **You mustn't** go near that old building! It's not safe!
- **You mustn't** eat the berries from that plant! They're poisonous!

## trespasser

### no trespassers!

A sign saying **no trespassers!** is put up by someone who does not want other people going on their land without permission:

- We can't walk along that path. There is a notice saying '**No trespassers!**'.
- We thought of having a picnic in the field by the river, but there was a sign saying '**No trespassers!**'.

#### Language Help

Sometimes the sign says '**Trespassers will be prosecuted!**'. This means that the owner of the land will take legal action against anyone found on the land without their permission.

## watch

### watch out!

You say **watch out!** to someone as a warning to act carefully or to get out of the way in case they hurt or harm themselves:

- **Watch out!** This path is very muddy!
- **Watch out!** There's a car coming!

#### Language Help

The expression **mind out!** is used in the same way:

- **Mind out!** There's a lorry trying to overtake you!



## Exercise 21

Answer the following questions.

- A** Write down an expression from the passage which has the same meaning as **take care!** and use it in a sentence.

---

---

- B** Some people do not want anyone going on their land without their permission. What is the noun used to refer to a person who does go on someone's land without permission?

---

- C** What sign is put up to warn people who do go on someone's land without permission that legal action will be taken against them?

---

- D** There are two expressions in the passage which have the same meaning as the expression **mind out!** Give both of these and show how one of them is used.

---

---

---

- E** Insert the word missing from each expression below.

- 1 **Keep** \_\_\_\_\_ **from** the cooker. It's very hot.
- 2 There's a dog barking and the sign says '**Beware** \_\_\_\_\_ the guard dog!'.
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_ touch the dog! It might bite you.
- 4 **You** \_\_\_\_\_ go along the cliff path. It's not safe.

*It was a hot day and the Brown family were at the beach with their son, Mike, their daughter, Sara, and some of the children's friends.*

'It's so hot that I need some ice cream to cool me down,' said Mr Brown. 'Would anyone else like one?' When most of the party said that they would also like some ice cream, Mr Brown asked, 'What flavour does everyone want? What does everyone like or **dislike**?'

**I like** chocolate ice cream,' said Sara, 'and so I'll have that.'

**I love** chocolate ice cream, too,' said Sara's friend Meg, 'but **I like** strawberry **best**. I'll have that, please.'

'I like chocolate very much, too,' said Mary, another of Sara's friends, 'but my favourite flavour is lemon. They don't always have it, though.'

'I'll ask,' said Mr Brown. 'They have quite a good selection. I'll get you chocolate if they don't have lemon, shall I?'

**I'm not very fond of** chocolate,' said Mrs Brown, 'and **I hate** any flavour of ice cream that tastes of toffee. It's far too sweet for me. **I prefer** raspberry, but they might not have it. I'll have strawberry if they don't, please.'

'And, as you know, **I detest** anything with nuts in it,' said Mr Brown. 'I'm going to have plain vanilla. What about you boys?'

'I like chocolate bars and so on,' said Mike, 'but **I can't stand** chocolate ice cream for some reason. I'll have strawberry, please.'

'I know it's unusual, but **I'm not very keen on** ice cream at all,' said Bill. 'I'd rather have an orange juice, please, if that's OK.'

'And **I** actually **loathe** it,' said Bob. 'It's too sweet and it makes me feel sick. I'll have an orange juice, too, if that's all right.'

'It is unusual not to like ice cream, especially when you're young,' said Mrs Brown, 'but **I'm not mad about** it myself. It's just when the weather's very hot that it sometimes **appeals to me**.'

Mr Brown had been writing down everyone's requests and now said, 'Right! I think I've got a note of what everyone wants. I'll go and get them but I'll need some help to carry it all.'

Mike helped his father and everyone enjoyed whatever they had chosen.

## Useful Expressions

### appeal

#### ... appeals to me

You say that something **appeals to you** when you like it or you find it attractive or interesting:

- *I'm trying to decide where to go on holiday. Greece has always **appealed to me**, although I've never been there.*
- *The film that's on at the local cinema will probably **appeal to the children**. I think I'll take them to it.*

#### Language Help

When you don't like something or don't find it attractive or interesting, you say that that something **doesn't appeal to you**:

- *I usually like Indian food, but it **doesn't appeal to me** today. I think I'll go to the local Italian restaurant.*

### dislike

You say that you **dislike** something when you do not like it. The word is not as strong as the word **hate** (see below):

- *I **dislike** red meat and never eat it.*
- *I **dislike** my new job and plan to find another one as soon as possible.*

### detest

#### I detest ...

You say **I detest** something or someone when

you dislike them very, very much. The word is even stronger than the word **hate**:

- *I **detest** liver. It makes me feel sick.*
- *I'm certainly not asking Sara to my birthday party. I absolutely **detest** her.*

### fond

#### I'm not very fond of ...

You say **I'm not very fond of** something when you do not really like that something:

- *I'm not very fond of spicy food.*
- *I read a lot of fiction, but I'm not very fond of biography.*

### hate

#### I hate ...

You say **I hate** something or someone when you dislike them very much:

- *I **hate** living in the city. I'm going back to live in the country as soon as possible.*
- *I **hate** Frank. He's so rude to everyone, even his teachers.*

### keen

#### I'm not very keen on ...

You say **I'm not very keen on** something when you do not really like that something:

- *I like most green vegetables, but I'm not very keen on broccoli.*
- *I like going to the cinema, but I'm not very keen on violent films.*



## like

### I like ...

You say **I like** something when you enjoy it or think that it is pleasant:

- *I like chicken dishes.*
- *I like dancing.*

### I like ... best

You say **I like** (something) **best** when you like it better than anything else of a similar kind:

- *I like most vegetables, but I like green beans best.*
- *I enjoy most sports, but I like tennis best.*

## loathe

### I loathe ...

You say **I loathe** something or someone when you dislike them very, very much. The word is even stronger than the word **hate** and has much the same meaning as **detest** (see above):

- *Jim wanted me to go to the theatre with him, but it's a musical that's on and I loathe musicals.*
- *Don't ask Peter to dinner if you're asking Lucy. They used to go out together, but they now loathe each other.*

## love

### I love ...

You say **I love** something when you like something very much:

- *I love my mother's apple pie.*
- *I love the autumn. I like it better than the summer months.*

#### Language Help

When you say **I love** someone you have very strong warm feelings for them, sometimes of a romantic nature:

- *The children love their father very much.*
- *Jane and John love each other and want to get married.*

## mad

### I'm not mad about ...

You say **I'm not mad about** something when you do not really like it. The expression is used in an informal context:

- *I'm not mad about pizza, but I like pasta dishes.*
- *I'm not mad about opera, but Jane had no one else to go with.*

#### Language Help

If you say **I'm mad about** something you mean that you like it very much. The expression is used in an informal context:

- *The boys are both mad about football.*

## prefer

### I prefer ...

You say **I prefer** something when you like it better than something else:

- *I prefer fish to meat.*
- *I prefer the theatre to the cinema.*

## stand

### I can't stand ...

You say **I can't stand** something or someone when you dislike them very much:

- *I can't stand salmon, although I like most other fish.*
- *I can't stand Jack's new girl friend. She talks about herself all the time.*

## Exercise 22

Answer the following questions.

**A** Write down two verbs from the passage which mean the same as **hate** but express stronger feeling.

---

**B** What verb from the passage would you use if you want to indicate that you like something better than something else?

---

**C** Insert the word missing from each expression below.

- 1 **I can't** \_\_\_\_\_ the noise from the flat above any longer. I'm going to complain.
- 2 **I'm not** \_\_\_\_\_ **about** living here, but it's cheap and it's near my work.
- 3 The idea of living somewhere warm \_\_\_\_\_ **to me**, but my husband won't even consider it.
- 4 **I'm not very fond** \_\_\_\_\_ beach holidays but I'm renting a cottage by the seaside for the sake of the children.
- 5 **I'm not very** \_\_\_\_\_ **on** accepting the job, but jobs in this area are scarce and it's well paid.

*John and Anne were trying to decide where to go on holiday. Anne had suggested asking her friend Amy, who worked in a London travel agent's, for some advice. She had always given them good advice in the past.*

John had thought of Australia, but Amy said, 'I **wouldn't advise** you to go there at this time of year. **You would be better to** go there in October, which is the start of their summer but still not too hot. It's winter there now, although it's never as bad as our winter.'

Anne mentioned Kenya. 'It depends when you want to go,' said Amy. 'A **word of advice!** You need to allow time to get all the vaccinations against various diseases and that can take some time. If you're thinking of Kenya, **I suggest that** you ask your doctor about vaccinations as soon as possible.'

John said that he was terrified of having needles stuck into him and he wasn't going anywhere that required that.

'**What about** somewhere in Europe? You might not want to go to the usual holiday resorts but there are lots of other places to choose from,' said Amy. 'If you did that I'd **recommend you to** fly and hire a car when you get there. Driving to and from where you want to go can take a considerable part of your holiday.'

Anne said that they had been on a lot of European city breaks and were looking for something different.

'**How about** North America? You still require a visa for the States, but visas don't usually take long to come through. You could still go there. It's a huge country and there's a lot to choose from. **Take my advice**, though, and don't try to do too much while you're there. I've had clients who've driven hundreds of miles and come back exhausted!'

'I don't really fancy the States,' said Anne, 'except New York and I'd rather go there on a short city break, but there's Canada. My mother has several relatives in the Toronto area.'

'That's a good choice and you can visit Niagra Falls while you're there,' replied Amy. '**You'd be well advised to** book fairly soon, though. It's become a very popular destination. In fact, **I propose that** you do it right away to be sure of getting a flight.'

John and Anne **took Amy's advice** and booked for Toronto the next day. They had a wonderful holiday there.



## Useful Expressions

### advice

#### ask someone for advice

When you **ask** someone **for advice** you ask them for information and to give you their opinion about what you should do in a particular situation:

- If you want to be a doctor when you leave school, you should **ask** Jim's father **for advice**. He's a doctor at one of the city hospitals.
- I can't decide what I want to do when I leave school. I'm going to **ask** the careers teacher **for** some **advice**.

#### give someone advice

When you **give** someone **advice** you give them information and tell them your opinion about what they should do in a particular situation:

- Tom's cousin is a lawyer and he **gave** me some **advice** about studying law before I went to university.
- Jane lives in the area and was able to **give** me **advice** about looking for a flat here.

#### Language Help

You can also **offer** someone **some advice**:

- Let me **offer** you **some advice**. You can get the same dress at a cheaper price in the shop next door.

You can also **give** someone **a piece of advice**:

- Let me **give** you **a piece of advice**. Before your job interview find out as much as you can about the firm.

#### take my advice

You say **take my advice** when you are telling someone how you think they should act in a particular situation:

- **Take my advice** and look at several houses in the area before making an offer on one.
- **Take my advice** and ask for a higher starting salary. What they are offering you is very low.

#### take someone's advice

When you **take someone's advice** you listen to what they think you should do in a particular situation and base your actions on this:

- I **took** your **advice** and planted an apple tree in the back garden.
- James **took** his father's **advice** and took a gap year before going to university.

#### a word of advice!

You say **a word of advice!** when you are going to tell someone something that you think will help them make the right decision when they are deciding what to do in a particular situation:

- I hear you're thinking of buying a flat in this area. **A word of advice!** Property here costs far more than it's worth.
- **A word of advice** if you're going to see Mary in her new cottage. Go by train! The roads are terrible and it took us far longer than we thought it would.

### advise

#### I wouldn't advise you to ...

You say **I wouldn't advise you to** do something when you are advising someone against doing something:

- **I wouldn't advise you to** go to that particular university. Its science courses aren't very good.
- **I wouldn't advise you to** accept that job. You can find something much better.

## you'd be well advised to ...

You say **you'd be well advised to** do something when you are telling someone that, if they are sensible, they will follow the advice that you are giving them:

- **You would be well advised to** look for another job immediately. The firm is in financial difficulties.
- **You would be well advised to** leave for the airport right away or you might miss your flight. The traffic is often very heavy at this time of day.

## better

### you would be better to ...

You say **you would be better to** do something when you are giving someone advice about how they should act in a particular situation:

- **You would be better to** find out more information about the college course before applying for it.
- You could get there by bus, but **you would be better to** go by train if you can afford it. It's much quicker.

## how

### how about ...?

The expression **how about ...?** is used in the same informal way as **what about ...?** (see below):

- **How about** going to the beach today?
- **How about** helping me with the garden today?

## if

### if I were you

You say **if I were you** when you are suggesting to someone that something is the best course of action in their situation:

- **If I were you**, I would rent a flat, rather than buy, until you see if you like the area.
- **If I were you**, I would buy a smaller car. It would be cheaper to run and much easier to park.

## propose

### I propose that

The expression **I propose that** is a more formal, sometimes official, way of saying **I suggest that** (see below):

- **I propose that** we all write letters of complaint to our MP.
- **I propose that** we ask Jane Brown to be club secretary.

## recommend

### I'd recommend you to ...

You say **I'd recommend you to ...** when you are suggesting to someone that something is the best course of action in their situation:

- **I'd recommend you to** stay off work for at least two weeks after the operation.
- If you want that hotel for your wedding reception **I'd recommend you to** book it now. It's extremely popular.

## suggest

### I suggest that

You say **I suggest that** when you are telling someone your ideas about what they should do in their particular situation:

- **I suggest that** you go to the Accident and Emergency Department at the hospital right away.
- **I suggest that** you draw up a business plan before asking the bank manager for a loan.

## what

### what about ...?

You say **what about ...?** when you are suggesting something informally:

- **What about** going to the cinema this evening?
- **What about** going to the new French restaurant for dinner?

## Exercise 23

Answer the following questions.

- A** What expression in the passage is a more formal way of saying **I suggest that**?
- 

- B** Insert the word missing from each expression below.

- 1 **You would be** \_\_\_\_\_ **to** borrow the money from your father than from a bank.
- 2 **If I** \_\_\_\_\_ **you**, I would accept the job, even although it's not exactly what you're looking for. You can always move later.
- 3 **You would be well** \_\_\_\_\_ **to** stay in your present job until you find another one.
- 4 **A** \_\_\_\_\_ **of advice!** John may be very attractive, but he's not very trustworthy with women.
- 5 **Let me give you a** \_\_\_\_\_ **of advice.** Don't invest in Peter's business without looking carefully at the books.

- C** What two expressions in the passage are informal ways of making a suggestion?
- 
- 

- D** What expression would you use to show that you are listening to what someone thinks you should do in a particular situation and that you will base your actions on this?
-



*Meg and Peter were going to get married. Where they were going to live after their marriage was going to be a problem because Meg worked on one side of the city and Peter at the other.*

'Have you thought any more about where you're going to look for a flat, Meg?' asked her friend Mary.

'We've thought about it a lot, but **we haven't decided** yet,' replied Meg. 'Peter **is convinced** that it's sensible to look for somewhere in the city centre so that neither of us would have to travel too much, but **I'm not sure** whether I want to live there. For one thing, flats in the city centre are very expensive and for another, I think living there might be very noisy.'

'**There's no doubt** that living in the suburbs would be quieter,' said Mary, 'but housing in some of them can be even more expensive than in the city centre.'

'You're right,' said Meg. 'Property in the area where I work is very expensive. **It's** very **doubtful** if we could afford to buy anything there.'

'What about where Peter works?' asked Mary.

'It's much cheaper around there,' said Meg. '**I'm certain** we could afford quite a reasonable house somewhere there.'

'Would it be possible for you to get a job in that area, too?' asked Mary. 'Then neither of you would have to travel very far to work.'

'**Perhaps**. Quite a lot of firms have moved out there in the past few years,' said Meg. '**Undoubtedly**, I'd find a job of some kind, but I have to think of my career. Still, it's **definitely** something I'm going to think about and **maybe** I'll make a few enquiries soon.'

'Are you quite happy in your present job?' asked Mary. 'Do you not like the idea of moving?'

'I have a very good job just now and I like it very much,' said Meg, 'but the future of the firm's rather **uncertain** at the moment. There've been two take-over bids recently and **no one knows** what's likely to happen. It's all rather **up in the air**. I'm just going to wait and see what happens. I'm **sure** I'll know what's happening long before the wedding.'

'Well, good luck with your housing problems, anyway!' said Mary as she left her friend at the bus stop.

## Useful Expressions

### air

#### it's up in the air

You say that **something's up in the air** when no decision has been made about it yet and no one knows what will happen:

- Our holiday **plans are still up in the air** because my husband doesn't know when he can get away from work.
- Interviews have taken place but there's been no announcement about who's getting the manager's job. **It's still up in the air**.

### certain

#### I'm certain

You say **I'm certain** when you are completely sure about something and have no doubts:

- **I'm certain** that the meeting's tomorrow night. I wrote the date down in my diary.
- **I'm certain** that Jim and Mary are married. I was at their wedding.

### convince

#### be convinced

You say that you **are convinced** when you feel completely sure about something and have no doubts:

- **I am convinced** that Jim is the right man for the job, but not everyone on the committee agrees with him.
- **I am convinced** that that is the man who attacked me. I'm going to phone the police.

### decide

#### we haven't decided

You say **we haven't decided** when you are still not sure about what you are going to do and have not yet chosen any of the possibilities available to you:

- We've discussed various hotels for the wedding reception, but **we haven't decided** yet.
- We've been offered a choice of flats to rent, but **we haven't decided** yet.

### Language Help

You can also say **we haven't come to a decision** or **we haven't made up our minds** in the same situation:

- There are various courses of action open to us, but **we haven't come to a decision** yet.
- The travel agent has offered us package deals to various resorts, but **we haven't made up our minds** yet.

## definitely

You say **definitely** when there is no doubt about something:

- We **definitely** want to go ahead with the project.
- John has **definitely** got the job, because he showed me the official letter offering him it.

## doubt

### there's no doubt

You say **there's no doubt** when something is certainly true:

- **There's no doubt** that the accused is guilty. He was found with the murder weapon in his hand.
- **There's no doubt** that Peter deserved the prize. He's by far the best student in the class.

## doubtful

### it's doubtful

You say **it's doubtful** when something is unlikely to happen:

- **It's doubtful** whether Jim will be able to play in the match next week. He injured his ankle yesterday.
- Experts think that **it's doubtful** that this painting is by Van Gogh.

### Language Help

**Doubtful** can also mean not sure about something:

- I suggested that we all go in Anne's car, but she looked **doubtful** about the idea.

## know

### no one knows

You say **no one knows** when something is very uncertain and it is not known what will happen or what has happened:

- **No one knows** what is going to happen to the old church. It is important from an architectural point of view, but it would cost an incredible amount of money to repair.
- **No one knows** what happened to the woman who used to live there. She just disappeared one day.

## maybe

You say **maybe** with reference to something that may be true or to something that may happen, but you are not sure:

- I'll **maybe** go to the cinema this evening.
- **Maybe** the bus was late.

## perhaps

You say **perhaps** with reference to something that may be true or to something that may happen, but you are not sure. It is slightly more formal than **maybe** (see above):

- **Perhaps** I'll ask my neighbours to the party.
- **Perhaps** John has decided not to come. He's very late.

## sure

### I'm sure

You say **I'm sure** when you believe or know that something is true and have no doubts:

- **I'm sure** I switched the burglar alarm on before I left the building. I remember checking it.
- **I'm sure** that that is Jean's car. I know the registration number.

### I'm not sure

You say **I'm not sure** when you do not know whether something is true or when you have doubts about something:

- I think I parked the car here, but **I'm not sure**.
- 'Is that Anne's sister over there?'  
**'I'm not sure.** It's many years since I last saw her.'



## uncertain

You say that something is **uncertain** when it is not possible to be sure what will happen to it or what has happened:

- The financial state of the company is **uncertain**. The accountants will give their report when they have studied the books.
- The cause of the fatal accident is still **uncertain**. There is to be an investigation.
- The word is of **uncertain** origin.
- It is **uncertain** whether the school will be closed or not.

### Language Help

You say that you are **uncertain** about something when you are **not sure**:

- I am **uncertain** what to do next.

## undoubtedly

You say **undoubtedly** when you are emphasizing that something is definitely true:

- The lorry driver had been drinking and that was **undoubtedly** the cause of the accident.
- He was **undoubtedly** the best chef in the restaurant.

## Exercise 24

Answer the following questions.

- A** You say I'm **convinced about it** when you believe that something is true and have no doubts. What two other expressions in the passage have the same meaning and can be used in the same way?

---

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- B** You use the adverb **definitely** when you are indicating that something is true and about which there is no doubt. What adverb in the passage also has this meaning but is used in a more emphatic way? Use this in a sentence.

---

---

- C** Write down a word which means the same as **perhaps** but is slightly more informal. Use it in a sentence.

---

---

- D** Insert the word missing from each expression below.

- 1 **No one** \_\_\_\_\_ how the fire started. The cause is still being investigated.
- 2 We don't know whether or not we're going to sell the house. **We haven't come to a** \_\_\_\_\_ yet.
- 3 **There is** \_\_\_\_\_ **doubt** that Jim is capable of doing the job, but he is extremely lazy and doesn't try.
- 4 The fate of the old building **is** still \_\_\_\_\_ **in the air**, although a group has been formed to try to save it.
- 5 **It's** \_\_\_\_\_ whether Sara will be able to go on holiday to Australia. She still doesn't have enough money.

*Peter **had had** a bad cold for a few days. Instead of getting better it seemed to be getting worse. He didn't usually bother going to the doctor with just a cold, but he was beginning to **feel** really ill and he rang and made an appointment.*

When he saw the doctor, the doctor said, 'What's the matter with you, Peter? I don't often see you in my surgery.'

**I feel terrible**, Dr Thomson. I've had a cold and it's just getting worse and worse.'

**Do you have a fever?**' asked the doctor.

'I don't know,' said Peter. '**I haven't taken my temperature**, but sometimes I feel hot and sometimes I feel very cold.'

**You've got a temperature**, all right,' said the doctor, when he had taken Peter's temperature with his thermometer. '**Are you in any pain?**'

**'My chest hurts** and I've got a sore throat,' replied Peter, 'and I have a bad cough, especially at night.'

Doctor Thomson took out his stethoscope and examined Peter. 'You've had a **viral infection** and there's not much you can do about that except **take some painkillers** to make you feel better. However, you've now got a **bacterial infection** and that has to **be treated with antibiotics**. **I'll give you a prescription** for some and you should start them right away. You're not **allergic to** penicillin, are you?'

Peter said that he was not and Dr Thomson said, 'These pills will soon **cure** the infection. Take them three times a day before meals with a little water. I've given you **a seven-day course** and you must be sure to finish the course. Don't stop taking the pills just because you're feeling slightly better. If you do that the infection will just come back. After you've been to the chemist you should go home to bed and be sure to drink plenty of **fluids**. I'm sure you'll feel better soon.'

Peter hoped so too. By this time he just wanted to go home and lie down. However, in a few days he felt much better and in a week he **had fully recovered**. The pills had worked.



## Useful Expressions

### allergic be allergic to

If you **are allergic to** something you feel ill in some way when you eat or touch it:

- Jim **is allergic to** cats. He sneezes and finds it difficult to breathe when he comes into contact with one.
- Lucy **is allergic to** sea foods. She comes out in a rash when she eats crab, for example.

#### Language Help

The expression **have an allergy to ...** means the same as **be allergic to ...**:

- Many people **have an allergy to** that plant. They get an itchy skin rash whenever they touch it.

### antibiotics

**Antibiotics** are substances which are able to destroy or prevent further growth of bacteria in the body and so can cure an infection caused by them:

- I had a serious blood infection last year, but it was cured by **antibiotics**.
- After the operation my wound became infected and it had to be treated with **antibiotics**.

### cold have a cold

When you **have a cold** you have a common infectious illness which affects the nose and throat, often making you sneeze and cough and making it difficult for you to breathe properly:

- I keep sneezing. I think I **have a cold**.
- My elder daughter **had a cold** and now the baby has caught it from her.

### cough have/get a cough

When you **have** or **get a cough** air comes out of your throat with a sudden, short, noisy sound:

- I'm not going to the concert tonight. I **have a cough** and I don't want to disturb other people in the audience.
- I always **get a cough** when there are people smoking near me.

### course a ... course

When you are given a **... course** of pills or other forms of medicine it means that you have to take them regularly for a certain number of days. Medicines may be given for longer or shorter periods of time, for example, **a five-day course** or **a two-week course**:

- I have a throat infection and have been prescribed **a seven-day course** of antibiotics.
- I am half-way through **a seven-day course** of penicillin and my chest infection is already much better.

### cure

Something is said to **cure** an infection, disease, etc, when it makes it better:

- I was given a course of antibiotics which **cured** my throat infection.
- The ointment which the doctor prescribed **cured** the rash on my arms quite quickly.

### fever do you have a fever?

When someone asks **do you have a fever?** they are asking if you have a body temperature which is higher than normal, especially

considerably higher than usual. This sometimes happens when you are ill:

- *You don't look well and your face is very red. **Do you have a fever?***
- *You sound as though you have a very sore throat. **Do you have a fever?***

### Language Help

Another way of saying this is **do you have a temperature?**

See **take your temperature** below.

## fluids

The word **fluids** is a more technical word for liquids. Doctors often recommend that you drink a lot of fluids when you are ill:

- *Could you get me some orange juice and mineral water from the shop? The doctor told me to make sure that I drink plenty of **fluids**.*
- *There's a jug of water by your bedside and I'll get you some fruit juice. The doctor said that you need to drink a lot of **fluids**.*

## hurt

### my chest hurts

You say **my chest hurts** when you have pain in your chest. You also use the expression with reference to other parts of the body:

- *I slipped on the ice and my ankle **hurts**.*
- *I've been digging the garden and my back **hurts**.*

### Language Help

Doctors sometimes ask **where does it hurt?** when they want their patients to tell them which part of their body is sore:

- *I'm told you fell backwards from the ladder. **Where does it hurt?***

## ill

### feel ill

When you **feel ill** it means that you do not feel well, as though you were suffering from some illness or disease:

- *I **feel ill**. I think I'm getting a cold.*
- *I **feel ill**. I have a headache and my stomach hurts.*

## infection

### bacterial infection

A **bacterial infection** is one that has been caused by a **bacterium** or **bacteria**. A bacterium is a very small form of plant life which lives in air, earth and water and also on living and dead animals, and can cause disease:

- *Lucy injured her leg and then got a **bacterial infection** in the wound.*
- *The vet says that the dog has a **bacterial skin infection** and has given us an ointment to spread on the affected area.*

### viral infection

A **viral infection** is one which has been caused by a **virus**. A virus is a very, very small living thing which is one of the causes of disease in humans, animals and plants. An illness caused in this way is also known as a **virus**:

- *Jim's doctor says that he is suffering from a **viral infection** of the lungs.*
- *Sara is off work with a **viral infection**.*

## matter

### what's the matter with you?

A doctor says **what's the matter with you?** when he wants to know in what way someone is ill or in pain and why they have to see a doctor:

- *Good morning, Mr Jones. **What's the matter with you** today?*



- Good morning, Mrs Brown. **What's the matter with you?** Is your leg sore again?

### Language Help

You can also use **what's the matter with you?** to find out why someone is unhappy, worried, etc:

- **What's the matter with you, Mary?** You look rather anxious.

## pain

### are you in any pain?

A doctor asks someone **are you in any pain?** when he or she wants to know if any part of the patient's body is sore:

- You have quite a high fever. **Are you in any pain?**
- We believe that the operation was a complete success. **Are you in any pain?**

## painkiller

### take some painkillers

**Painkillers** are pills or other medicines which lessen pain:

- If you have a bad headache take some **painkillers** and go to bed.
- If your leg is hurting badly take some **painkillers**. There is a bottle of paracetamol tablets in the bathroom cabinet.

## prescription

### I'll give you a prescription for ...

A doctor says **I'll give** or **write you a prescription for** something when he writes on a piece of paper details of the medicine which will help cure his patient's illness:

- **I'll write you a prescription** for some strong painkillers.
- **I'll write you a prescription** for some sleeping pills.

## recover

### have fully recovered

When you **have fully recovered** you are completely cured of an illness:

- I had flu last week but I **have** now **fully recovered**.
- Peter had to have a stomach operation two months ago, but he **has** now **fully recovered**.

## sore

### I've got a sore throat

You say **I've got a sore throat** when your throat hurts. The expression can also be used with reference to other parts of the body:

- **I've got a sore lip.** Is it bleeding?
- **I've got a sore eye.** I think I may have an infection in it.

## temperature

### take your temperature

You **take your temperature**, which is the measurement of how hot your body is, to find out if it is higher than normal. You take your temperature with a thermometer, which is a device with a scale to measure the heat of your body. When you are ill your temperature is often higher, especially considerably higher, than normal. When your temperature is considerably higher than normal you are said to **have a fever**:

- You sound as though you may have flu. You should **take your temperature**.
- It's very cold in here and, if you're feeling hot, you may have a fever. You should **take your temperature**.
- My son says that he is feeling ill, but I have **taken his temperature** and it is normal.

### you've got a temperature

Someone says to you **you've got a temperature** when they have taken your



temperature with a thermometer and have found it to be higher than normal. You usually feel hot to the touch:

- **You've got a temperature.** *I think you might have flu. You should go to bed.*
- **You've got a temperature** as well as a skin rash. *You should call the doctor.*

See also **take your temperature** above.

## **terrible**

### **I feel terrible**

You say **I feel terrible** when you feel ill:

- *I've just been sick and **I feel terrible!***
- ***I feel terrible!** I've got a bad cold.*

## **treat**

When a doctor **treats** an infection or disease he or she gives the patient some kind of medicine to try to cure it:

- *I'm going to **treat** that rash with a steroid ointment.*
- *The doctor **treated** my eye infection with some eye drops.*

## Exercise 25

Answer the following questions.

- A** What instrument do you use when you **take your temperature**?
- 
- B** If **you have a temperature**, is your body hotter or lower than the normal body temperature?
- 
- C** What is a **prescription**?
- 
- D** What are **bacteria** and what do you call an infection that is caused by them?
- 
- E** What is a more technical term for **liquids**?
- 
- F** Write down an expression which means the same as **be allergic to** something.
- 
- G** What expression do you usually use if you want to say that your throat hurts?
- 
- H** Insert the word missing from each expression below.
- 1 *I've had a bad throat infection for a couple of weeks and it doesn't seem to be getting any better. I'm going to ask the doctor if I need some \_\_\_\_\_.*
  - 2 **Take some** \_\_\_\_\_. *They should make your headache less painful.*
  - 3 **I have a** \_\_\_\_\_ *and I keep coughing and sneezing.*

*When Sue met some of her friends for coffee she had some very special news to tell them. She had just discovered that she was going to have a baby.*

**'That's wonderful news,'** said Lucy. 'When is the baby due?'

**'It's due at the end of September,'** said Sue, **'and I'm so happy!'**

**'Ben must be thrilled!'** said Jean. Ben was Sue's husband.

**'Yes, he's over the moon** about the baby,' said Sue. 'He can't wait to be a father. My parents are **overjoyed** as well. This will be their first grandchild. Ben's parents are **delighted** as well, of course, but they already have two grandchildren.'

Just then Sara and Anne came into the café and Sara said, **'I'm so pleased for you!'** You must be very **excited**.'

**'Indeed I am and my sister's ecstatic** about it. She's always wanted to be an aunt. She's hoping that the baby will be a little girl so that she can buy her lots of pretty clothes. I don't mind whether it's a boy or a girl. I'll just be **glad** if it's healthy, no matter what sex it is.'

**'Would Ben prefer a boy or a girl?'** asked Jean.

**'He hasn't said that he has any preferences, but I suspect that he would secretly like a boy so that he can teach him to play football!'** You know what men are like about football!'

**'Perhaps you'll have twins—one of each sex. That would be good!'** said Anne.

**'No, it wouldn't!'** laughed Sue. 'I'm worried about how I'll cope with one baby. I certainly couldn't cope with two.'

At this point they were joined by Tom and Mike. **'I've just heard about the baby, Sue,'** said Tom. **'That's great!'** You must be very happy—and Ben must be **pleased as Punch!**

Mike said, **'Yes, it's absolutely marvellous!'** I'm sure you and Ben will make very good parents.'

**'I hope so,'** said Sue, 'although we're both rather nervous about the idea. Neither of us has had any experience of looking after young babies. We'll just have to do our best.'



## Useful Expressions

### delighted

When you are **delighted** about something you are very pleased:

- I'm **delighted** that you are going to share the flat with us.
- I'm **delighted** that I've got the job. I'm really looking forward to it.

### ecstatic

When you are **ecstatic** you are feeling very, very happy about something and acting in a very excited way:

- James has asked Mary to marry him and she is absolutely **ecstatic** about the proposal.
- Peter won the tennis championship and he was absolutely **ecstatic** about it. At the start of the match he thought his opponent was sure to win.

### excited

When you are **excited** you are very happy about something, often something that is going to happen, and you show this happiness by acting in a very energetic, eager way:

- The children have been asked to a birthday party next week and they are very **excited** about it.
- My daughters are both very **excited** about next week's charity ball. They talk of nothing else.

### glad

When you are **glad** you are pleased and happy:

- I was **glad** to hear that you arrived home safely.
- I will be **glad** if I pass at least three exams. I'm not at all hopeful about the other two.

### great

#### that's great!

You say **that's great!** in an informal context to show that you are very pleased about something:

- 'John and Sara have announced their engagement.'  
**'That's great! I must go and congratulate them.'**
- 'Lucy and Jean are having a party to celebrate the end of term.'  
**'That's great! I haven't been to a party for a long time. I was too busy studying for the exams.'**

### happy

#### I'm so happy!

You say **I'm so happy!** to emphasize how happy and pleased you are:

- My boyfriend's coming home for Christmas!  
**I'm so happy!**
- **I'm so happy!** I've just heard that I've got a place at the drama college.

### marvellous

#### it's marvellous!

You say **it's marvellous!** to show that you are extremely pleased about something:

- **It's marvellous** that Jim's heart operation has been such a success!
- **It's marvellous** to see you again!

### moon

#### over the moon

When you say that someone is **over the moon** about something you mean that they are extremely happy and excited about that particular thing. The expression is used in informal contexts:

- Mum and Dad are **over the moon** that we're all going home for Christmas this year.
- I'm **over the moon** that Jean's asked me to be bridesmaid at her wedding.

## news

### that's wonderful news!

You say **that's wonderful news!** when you have just heard some news that pleases you very much:

- 'Lucy came top of her college class!' **'That's wonderful news! I must ring and congratulate her.'**
- 'Peter has just rung to say he got the job.' **'That's wonderful news! I know how much he wanted it.'**

## overjoyed

When you are **overjoyed** about something you are extremely happy. It suggests an even stronger emotion than the expression **be delighted**.

- I was **overjoyed** when Peter asked me to marry him.
- Lucy was **overjoyed** at getting a place at Oxford University.

## pleased

### I'm so pleased for you!

You say **I'm so pleased for you!** to emphasize how happy you are that something good has happened to someone:

- I hear that you've just been promoted. **I'm so pleased for you!**
- I've just heard that you and Jim are getting married. **I'm so pleased for you both!**

## pleased as Punch

When you are **pleased as Punch** you are extremely happy about something:

- Jack was **pleased as Punch** when he passed his driving test first time.
- Mary was **pleased as Punch** with her new flat.

### Language Help

Punch is a character in the traditional puppet show *Punch and Judy*.

## thrilled

You say you are **thrilled** when you are extremely happy and excited about something:

- Lucy was **thrilled** when Sara asked her to be her bridesmaid.
- I was **thrilled** to get a letter from my uncle in Australia asking me to visit him.

## Exercise 26

Answer the following questions.

**A** Insert the word missing from each expression below.

- 1 Bill was \_\_\_\_\_ **as Punch** when he won a free holiday in a competition.
- 2 Bob was **over the** \_\_\_\_\_ when Sara agreed to marry him.
- 3 'We've just heard that Jim has been found not guilty by the jury.'  
**'That's wonderful \_\_\_\_\_ !'**
- 4 I hear that you've been accepted for drama college. **I'm so pleased**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **you!**

**B** What does it mean if you say that someone is **ecstatic**?

---

**C** How do people tend to act if they feel **excited**?

---

**D** What expression in the passage suggests a stronger degree of happiness or pleasure than **delighted**? Use this expression in a sentence.

---

---

**E** What informal expression from the passage do people use when they are very pleased about something?

---



*Banchester Council were holding a meeting about the town's increasingly difficult traffic problems.*

**'We are all agreed** that the present traffic situation in the town is not acceptable,' said Councillor Wilson, 'and we really have to come up with a solution.'

**'I quite agree with you** that a solution to the traffic problem has to be found as soon as possible,' said Councillor Brown. 'Apart from anything else, people in the town are getting very angry about it and it's beginning to keep tourists away.'

**There was a general consensus** that the current traffic situation had to be improved and several councillors put forward suggestions.

Councillor Black said, 'I propose that we make the centre of the town a traffic-free zone. That will reduce the traffic congestion in the town, and encourage people to use the high-street shops.'

**'I am in complete agreement with you,'** said Councillor Jackson. 'Because it is so difficult to drive to the town centre and to park when you get there, many people are choosing to use the out-of-town shopping malls instead.'

**'I couldn't disagree with you more,'** said Councillor Blair. 'If we ban private cars from the town centre many people will not come in to shop at all.'

**'I'm with you there!'** agreed Councillor Miller. 'That has happened in other towns which have pedestrianized their town centres and I know that many local businesses are afraid that it may happen here.'

**'I agree with you up to a point,'** said Councillor Jones. 'People will be reluctant to shop in the centre of the town if we make it difficult for them to get there. But we can improve public transport and encourage car-drivers to use it.'

**'I really must take issue with** Councillor Black on his proposal to ban cars from the town centre,' said Councillor Davis. 'I myself have a shop in the middle of town and, if we make the town centre a pedestrian-only zone, I know that my shop and all the others will lose even more business.'

'I'm afraid I don't **share your view**, Councillor Davis,' said Councillor Jackson. 'Many people would prefer to shop in a safe, traffic-free zone. And, in any case, we shouldn't think only about the effects on business. Reducing traffic in the town centre would reduce pollution.'

At the end of the long meeting several councillors **were still at odds with each other** and they had to admit that they had failed to **reach an agreement** on what should be done. The only conclusion that was reached was that another meeting should be called.

## Useful Expressions

### agree

#### I agree with you up to a point

You say **I agree with you up to a point** to someone when you agree with them partly, but not completely, about something:

- ***I agree with you up to a point** when you say that Jim's not very good at the job, but he's only been doing it for a week and he's very keen to learn.*
- ***I know that you were very critical about the boy's behaviour, and I agree with you up to a point, but we must remember that he was trying to help his family.***

#### I quite agree with you

You say **I quite agree with you** when you agree completely with what someone says:

- ***I quite agree with you** that the play was very badly acted.*
- ***I quite agree with you** that the service in this hotel is very poor.*

#### we are all agreed

You say **we are all agreed** when you and several other people have the same opinion about something:

- ***We were all agreed** that Lucy Smith was the best person for the job.*
- ***We were all agreed** that the cottage would make a perfect holiday home for the family.*

#### Language Help

The expression **there is a general consensus** (of opinion that ...) (see below) has the same meaning.

### agreement

#### I am in complete agreement with

You say **I am in complete agreement with** someone when you want to emphasize that you fully agree with what they say:

- ***I heard what you said about the need to take stronger action against bullying and I am in complete agreement with you.***
- ***Your English teacher thinks that you need to do some extra studying and I am in complete agreement with her.***
- ***I am in complete agreement with** all you have said about the need for change.*



### Language Help

You can also use **I agree with you wholeheartedly** in a similar way:

- *I know that you think that we need some changes to the school timetable and **I agree with you wholeheartedly**.*

## reach an agreement

When people **reach an agreement** they have come to the same opinion about something, after some discussion:

- *Representatives of workers and managements talked all day about wages and working conditions and finally **reached an agreement**.*
- *The two countries held talks about the border dispute, but failed to **reach an agreement**.*

### Language Help

An expression which is used in the same way is **come to an agreement**:

- *John and Mary are having an argument over where to hold their wedding. Let's hope they **come to an agreement** soon or there might not be a wedding.*

## consensus

### there was a general consensus

You say **there is a general consensus** when a number of people agree about something:

- ***There was a general consensus** among the committee members that the plans for the new building should be rejected.*
- ***There was a general consensus** among the parents that the new principal was very efficient.*

### Language Help

The expression **we are all agreed** has the same meaning.

The expression **we were unanimous** emphasizes that no one has disagreed when a number of people have reached a decision:

- *The meeting to decide what to do about the proposed new building was a short one. **We were unanimous** in voting against it.*
- *The accused was found guilty of murder. **The jury was unanimous**.*

## disagree

### I couldn't disagree with you more

You say **I couldn't disagree with you more** when you want to emphasize how much you disagree with someone:

- *I know you think that the school should close, but **I couldn't disagree with you more**. It's a vital part of the community.*
- *I've heard your recommendations for the proposed new building and **I couldn't disagree with you more**. We want something that will fit in with the other buildings in the area.*

### Language Help

You can also say **I couldn't agree with you more** when you want to emphasize how much you agree with someone:

- *You wrote that something has to be done about bullying in the school and **I couldn't agree with you more**. Bullies must be made to realize that they will be punished.*



## issue

### take issue with

You **take issue with** someone over something when you disagree strongly with them about that particular thing and argue with them about it. The expression is used in formal contexts:

- Some of the parents **took issue with** the teacher over her handling of the situation.
- I wish to **take issue with** you over the poor quality of furniture which I received from your firm.

## odds

### be at odds with each other

People are said to **be at odds with each other** when they disagree with the opinions of each other and often argue about them:

- Workers and management **have been at odds with each other** over pay for a long time and now the workers have threatened to go on strike.
- The two countries **are at odds with each other** over fishing rights.

## view

### share someone's view

When you **share someone's view** you agree with them:

- I **share your view** about what should be done. Unfortunately the rest of the committee members disagree.
- My husband thinks that the children should be given more homework, but I don't **share his view**.

## with

### I'm with you there!

You say **I'm with you there!** when you want to show that you agree with someone. The expression is used in an informal context:

- 'I'm so tired! I wish it were the weekend.'  
**'I'm with you there! I feel exhausted.'**
- 'The prices in this shop are far too high.'  
**'I'm with you there! Let's go somewhere else!'**

## Exercise 27

Answer the following questions.

- A** What informal expression from the passage could you use to show that you agree with someone?

---

- B** What expression from the passage might you use

1 to emphasize how much you disagree with someone?

---

2 to show that you disagree with someone in part, but not completely?

---

3 to emphasize that you agree with someone fully?

---

- C** Insert the word missing from each expression below.

1 Jim and his brothers **were at** \_\_\_\_\_ **with each other** for many years but they are now good friends.

2 I know that you are in favour of the construction of a new shopping complex, but **I do not share your** \_\_\_\_\_.

3 Our local MP is in favour of the new housing development but a number of people in the town **have taken** \_\_\_\_\_ **with** him about it.

4 **There is a** \_\_\_\_\_ **consensus** among the staff that the present working conditions are unacceptable.

- D** What word emphasizes that no one disagreed in a joint decision? Use this word in a sentence.

---

---

*Mary had an essay to write. She was preparing to write it when she realized she didn't know the date.*

Mary asked Sue, one of her flatmates, **What date is it today, please, Sue?**

'I'm not sure,' replied Sue. 'I'll ask Meg. She's in the kitchen.'

**What's the date, Meg?** asked Sue. 'Mary wants to know for her essay.'

'I really don't know,' said Meg. 'I've been studying so hard all week I've not really paid much attention to time. **What day of the week is it?**'

'I do know that,' said Sue. 'It's Tuesday.'

Sue then looked at a newspaper lying on the table. 'This is yesterday's paper and yesterday was Monday, **the eighteenth of August**. So today is the nineteenth of August. I'll go and tell Mary.'

Sue went back to the living room and said to Mary, 'It's the nineteenth of August.'

Mary replied, 'Thanks! **What day is it?**'

Sue said, 'It's Tuesday.'

Mary replied, 'Oh, it's just as well I asked. I thought it was Monday. If it's Tuesday, I have a French class at 3 o'clock. **What time is it?**'

'You'll have to hurry,' said Sue. 'According to my watch, it's **quarter to three** now.'

Just then Meg came in from the kitchen, 'I think **your watch must be fast**, Sue. The kitchen clock says that it's just after **half past two**.'

They were then joined by Sara, who had just come back from a lecture. **What's the time, please, Sara?** asked Mary. 'The kitchen clock says that it's just after half past two and Sue's watch says it's quarter to three.'

**The kitchen clock is slow,** said Sara. 'I think it needs new batteries. Sue's **watch is right**.'

'Then I'm going to be late!' said Mary, rushing out of the door.



'I thought I was going to be late for my English lecture this morning because the bus was very late,' said Sara, 'but I managed to get there **on time**. I was glad because the English lecturer hates people being late. He says it's rude not to be **punctual**.'

'That's what my mother says,' said Sue. 'She's always **early** for everything. Come to think of it, her birthday's on August the twentieth and that's tomorrow. I had better go and send a card. I forgot last year and she was very hurt!'

## Useful Expressions

### date

#### what date is it?

You ask **what date is it?** when you want to know what day in the month, such as the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, etc, and possibly what month and year, it is:

- **'What date is it today? Is it the thirty-first of August?'**  
'No. It's the first of September today.'
- **'I need to put the date on this form. What date is it today?'**  
'It's June the ninth.'

#### Language Help

Other ways of asking the same thing are **what's the date?** and **what's today's date?**:

- **'I have to write some cheques to pay some bills. What's the date?'**
- **'What's today's date? I'm writing a letter to confirm the hotel booking.'**

### day

#### what day of the week is it?

You ask **what day of the week is it?** when you want to know whether it is Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday or Sunday:

- **'What day of the week is it? I never pay any attention to time when I'm on holiday.'**

- **'I feel very confused. What day of the week is it?'**

*'It's Wednesday. You've been very ill, but you're getting better now.'*

### early

#### be early

When **you are early** you arrive somewhere before the time that has been arranged:

- **'The train's not due for another half-an-hour. I'm early. I'll go and have a cup of coffee.'**
- **'I was so nervous that I was very early for my job interview.'**

### eighteenth

#### it's the eighteenth of August

You say **it's the eighteenth of August**, or the relevant month and number, when you are telling someone what day of the month it is:

- **'What date is it?'**  
**'It's the twentieth of April.'**
- **'What date have Lucy and Mike chosen for their wedding?'**  
**'The sixth of June.'**

#### Language Help

You can also say **it's August the eighteenth**, etc.

## fast

### someone's watch is fast

You say **someone's watch is fast** when it shows a time that is later than the actual time:

- *I thought the bus was late, but it was on time. **My watch was fast.***
- *I'm not late. It's exactly five o'clock. **Your watch must be fast.***

#### Language Help

The opposite of this expression is **someone's watch is slow**.

## half

### half past two

When you say **it's half past two**, or **half past** another number on the clock between one and twelve, you mean that it is halfway between two o'clock and three o'clock, or halfway between one number and the next on the clock:

- *The film starts at **half past seven**.*
- *We finish work at **half past five**.*

#### Language Help

You can also use **it's two thirty** or **two thirty**, etc, which means the same as **it's half past two**, etc:

- *We start work at **eight thirty**.*

## late

### be late

- When **you are late** you arrive somewhere at a later time than that arranged:

- *The coach has already left. **You're late.***
- ***You're late.** The film has already started.*

## punctual

### be punctual

When **you are punctual** you arrive at exactly the time that has been arranged and are not late:

- *The coach will leave at nine o'clock and it's important that **you are all punctual**.*
- *Don't worry about John being late. **He's** always **punctual**.*

#### Language Help

The expression **be on time** has the same meaning.

## quarter

### quarter to three

You say **quarter to three**, or another number on the clock, when the time is fifteen minutes before three o'clock, or another number on the clock:

- *The office is closed. It's **quarter to six**.*
- *It's **quarter to nine**. The shop doesn't open till nine o'clock.*

#### Language Help

The equivalent American English expression is **quarter of three**, etc:

- *We arranged to meet at **quarter of six**.*

You say **quarter past three**, or another number on the clock, when the time is fifteen minutes after three, etc:

- *The meeting starts at **quarter past ten**.*
- *The plane leaves at **quarter past eleven**.*

The equivalent expression in American English is **quarter after three**, etc:

- *The plane leaves at **quarter after four**.*
- *The train is due at **quarter after eleven**.*

## right

### someone's watch is right

When you say that **someone's watch is right** you mean that it is showing the actual time:

- **My watch is right.** I checked it with the radio news this morning.
- **My watch is definitely right.** I set it this morning.

## slow

### the clock is slow

You say **the clock is slow** when a clock is showing a time that is earlier than the actual time:

- I didn't realize that **the clock** in my office **was slow** and I missed the train.
- I thought my visitors were early but **the clock** in my living room **was slow**.

#### Language Help

The opposite of this expression is **the clock is fast**.

## time

### be on time

When **you are on time** you arrive at exactly the time that has been arranged and are not late:

- **You were on time** but the other members of the committee were late.
- If **you are not on time** for the interview you certainly will not get the job.

#### Language Help

The expression **be punctual** has the same meaning.

## what time is it?

You ask **what time is it?** when you want to know the time:

- **What time is it?** I've forgotten my watch.
- My watch has stopped. **What time is it, please?**

#### Language Help

You also ask **can you tell me the time, please?** when you want to know the time:

- **Can you tell me the time, please?** I've lost my watch.



## Exercise 28

Answer the following questions.

- A** What expression from the passage means the same as:
- 1 *Can you tell me the time?* \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2 *Two thirty?* \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3 *What's today's date?* \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4 *Be punctual?* \_\_\_\_\_
- B** What is the opposite of a watch being **fast**?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- C** In American English, what is the expression which indicates that the time is fifteen minutes before five o'clock?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- D** When you are telling someone what the date is you can say **it's the ninth of June**. How else could you express this?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- E** How do you express the fact that your watch is neither fast nor slow?  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Over the weekend, Jane had gone to a hairdresser's and changed her hairstyle.*

'Your hair is looking very nice today, Jane,' said her friend Meg when they met on their way to work.

'Thank you, Meg,' replied Jane. 'I got it done at that new salon in the High Street. I was tired of my old hairstyle.'

They were joined by Sara, who said, 'I do like your new hairstyle, Jane.'

'So do I,' said Lucy, who was with Sara. 'It suits you very well.'

'Thank you,' said Jane, 'but you're making me blush! I'm not used to so many people paying me compliments.'

They walked along the road to work, talking about other things, but Jane was to receive even more compliments when she got to the office.

Quite a few of her colleagues passed complimentary remarks, but she was particularly surprised when her boss, Mr Jackson, said, 'May I compliment you on your new hairstyle, Jane? It looks most attractive!'

Mr Jackson had never paid her a compliment before. Indeed, Jane sometimes wondered if he noticed her at all. 'I'm amazed at the effect a new hairstyle can have,' said Jane to herself.

One of the reasons Jane had decided to get a new hairstyle was to cheer herself up. She and her boyfriend, Peter, had had a quarrel and she had been feeling miserable. The new hairstyle seemed to be having the desired effect, but Jane had decided that she would try to cheer herself up further by buying a new dress.

The shops were open late that evening and so Jane went shopping straight after work. Often, when she went shopping she couldn't see anything she liked, but that evening she found quite a few that she liked the look of. She thought that one in particular suited her very well and she decided to buy it, although it cost more money than she had intended to spend.

Next day she wore her new dress to work and once again her colleagues showered her with compliments. Jean, the receptionist, said, 'How smart you look, Jane!'

Mary from the publicity department said, 'What a lovely dress, Jane! **It's just your colour!**'

'Thank you, Mary,' said Jane. '**It's very kind of you to say so.**'

Ben from production said, '**You're looking very elegant** for a working day, Jane!'

There were several **appreciative glances** from other colleagues and Tom, the office assistant, gave a loud **whistle** when he saw Jane. She was definitely feeling much happier now!

## Useful Expressions

### appreciative

#### appreciative glance

You give someone an **appreciative glance** when you admire them or find pleasure in looking at them:

- *The girls were given quite a few **appreciative glances** as they walked along the beach.*
- *The young women looked beautiful in their dance dresses and they received many **appreciative glances** from the young men.*

### attractive

#### it looks most attractive!

You say **it looks most attractive!** when you want to emphasize how attractive something is:

- *We should look round that cottage. **It looks most attractive!***
- *I like the way you've decorated the flat. **It looks most attractive!***

### blush

#### you're making me blush!

You say **you're making me blush!** when you feel embarrassed:

- ***You're making me blush** with all these compliments!*
- *Stop paying me so many compliments! **You're making me blush!***

### colour

#### it's just your colour!

You say **it's just your colour!** when you want to tell someone that the colour of the dress, etc, they are wearing suits them exceptionally well:

- *That's a lovely blue dress. **It's just your colour!***
- *I do like that shade of pink. **It's just your colour!***

### compliment (v)

#### may I compliment you on ...?

You say **may I compliment you on ...?** when you want to pay them a compliment. The expression is used in a formal context:

- ***May I compliment you on** your appearance? You look very attractive in your bridesmaid's dress.*
- ***May I compliment on** your choice of dress? It looks beautiful.*



## compliment (n)

### pay someone a compliment or compliments

When you **pay someone a compliment** you tell them that you admire or like something about them:

- *Sara is so beautiful that many people **pay her compliments**.*
- *Lucy gets embarrassed whenever anyone **pays her a compliment**.*

### receive a compliment or compliments

When you **receive a compliment or compliments** someone tells you that they admire or like something about you:

- *Jane was a lovely bride and **received many compliments**.*
- *Mary always blushes when she **receives a compliment**.*

### shower someone with compliments

When you **shower someone with compliments** you pay them a great many compliments:

- *Meg looked very beautiful on her wedding day and all the guests **showered her with compliments**.*
- *Anne looked very elegant in her new dress and her friends **showered her with compliments**.*

## complimentary

### pass complimentary remarks

You **pass complimentary remarks** when you tell someone that you admire and like something about them:

- *All his friends **passed complimentary remarks** when they saw John's new car.*
- *Jack was wearing his new suit and several of his women colleagues **passed complimentary remarks**.*

## elegant

### you're looking very elegant

When you say **you're looking very elegant** to someone you want to tell them that they look very attractive and smart and that you think they show good taste in their choice of clothes:

- ***You look very elegant** in your new suit.*
- *I do like your new coat. **You look very elegant**.*

## kind

### it's very kind of you to say so

You often say **it's very kind of you to say so** when someone has paid you a compliment:

- *'You look very attractive in your new coat.'*  
*'Thank you. **It's very kind of you to say so.**'*

## like

### I do like your new hairstyle

You say **I do like your new hairstyle**, etc, to someone when you want to pay them a compliment on their hairstyle or other features:

- *Anna, how nice you look! **I do like your new coat!***
- *Jack, **I do like your new shirt!** You look very handsome.*

## lovely

### what a lovely dress!

You say **what a lovely dress**, etc! when you want to pay someone a compliment on their dress, etc:

- ***What a lovely pair of evening shoes!** Where did you buy them?*
- ***What a lovely sweater!** It suits you very well!*

## smart

### how smart you look!

You say **how smart you look!** to someone when you want to tell them that they look well-dressed and attractive:

- Mary, **how smart you look!** Are you going somewhere special?
- **How smart you look!** That's a lovely dress.

## suit

### it suits you very well

When something **suits you very well** it means that it makes you look particularly attractive when you wear it:

- That shade of blue is very pretty. **It suits you very well.**
- That style of skirt **suits you very well.**

## thank

### thank you

You say **thank you** in response to a compliment which someone has paid you:

- 'You look very nice in that dress, Meg.'  
'**Thank you**, Lucy!'
- 'That hat really suits you, Anna.'  
'**Thank you**, Jane.'

## whistle

When you **whistle** or **whistle at** someone you make a high-pitched sound by forcing air out through your lips. In this context, men sometimes whistle to show their admiration for a woman's appearance. It is supposed to be a compliment, but not all women regard being whistled at in this way as a compliment and are annoyed by it:

- A very pretty girl walked past and all the workers on the building site **whistled at** her.
- A group of youths standing on the corner of the street **whistled** as the girls in short skirts walked past.

## Exercise 29

Answer the following questions.

**A** Insert the word missing from each expression below.

- 1 *Lucy is always beautifully dressed and people often \_\_\_\_\_ **her compliments**.*
- 2 *I'm sure Meg will \_\_\_\_\_ **many compliments** when she wears her new dress to the ball.*
- 3 *Jill looks very pretty in her outfit and I'm sure that a great many people will \_\_\_\_\_ **complimentary remarks** on her appearance.*
- 4 *That sweater is a lovely colour. It \_\_\_\_\_ **you very well**.*

**B** Why might a man **whistle at** a woman?

---

**C** What expression from the passage might you use when you feel embarrassed because you are being paid compliments?

---

**D** If you admire someone, what adjective could be used to describe the kind of glance you might give them?

---

**E** You might say **thank you** to someone who pays you a compliment. What other expression from the passage might you use?

---



*Mike was passing his dentist's surgery when he suddenly remembered that he hadn't had his teeth checked for some time. He had been meaning to ring and get an appointment, but had kept putting it off. He decided to go in and make one in person.*

'Good morning!' he said to the receptionist. 'I'd like to make an appointment with Mr Morris, please.'

'Certainly!' the receptionist replied. 'Is it urgent? Do you have toothache?'

'No, thank goodness!' replied Mike. 'It's just for a check-up.'

'Mr Morris is rather busy just now but I could give you an appointment on Friday of next week at 10 o'clock.'

'Sorry, I can't make that. I'll be away on a business trip,' said Mike.

'What about the following Tuesday, then, at 4 o'clock?' asked the receptionist. 'That's Tuesday the tenth of September.'

'That's fine! Afternoons suit me better, anyway,' said Mike.

Mike had the morning off and he decided to go and get his hair cut. He thought that he would be able to get it done right away, but he was wrong.

'Sorry, but you'll have to make an appointment. We're always very busy on Fridays,' said the receptionist. 'I could fit you in at one o'clock, if you like.'

'No, that's no good!' said Mike. 'I'm meeting a friend for lunch.'

'Well, we've had a cancellation at 6 o'clock. Does that suit you?' asked the receptionist.

'Yes, that suits me very well,' replied Mike.

Later Mike went to meet his friend Frank for lunch. During lunch they were hoping to set up a meeting to discuss a business matter in which they were both interested. They both consulted their diaries to find a suitable date and time.

'How about next Friday evening?' asked Mike.

'No, sorry, **I can't manage that,**' said Frank. 'I'm going to a party. **Are you free** on Saturday afternoon?'

'No, **I'm not free** then,' said Mike. 'I'm playing tennis. Could we meet on Sunday morning?'

'Yes, **that's all right,**' said Frank. '**Shall we say** 10 o'clock at my flat?'

'10.30 **would suit me better, if that's OK with you,**' said Mike.

'**That's fine. See you then!**' said Frank. 'I'll have the coffee ready.'

## Useful Expressions

### all right that's all right

You say **that's all right** when you are agreeing to an appointment or meeting which someone has suggested:

- 'We could give you an appointment at four o'clock this afternoon.'  
'**That's all right.** I'll come back then.'
- 'I could meet you tomorrow evening after work if that suits you.'  
'Yes, **that's all right.** I'll come to your office.'

### appointment I could give you an appointment

You say **I could give you an appointment** when you are suggesting a time for an appointment to someone:

- All the doctors are busy today, but **I could give you an appointment** with Dr Brown tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock.
- Mr Wilson is with a client just now, but **I could give you an appointment** right away with one of the other lawyers.

### I'd like to make an appointment with

You say **I'd like to make an appointment with** ... when you want to arrange to see someone,

often someone who provides a professional service, such as a doctor, dentist, optician, hairdresser, etc:

- **I'd like to make an appointment with the optician** to get my eyes tested.
- **I'd like to make a dental appointment with Mr Jackson.** It's just for a check-up.

### you'll have to make an appointment

You say **you'll have to make an appointment** when you are telling someone that they cannot see someone, often someone who provides a professional service, such as a doctor, dentist, optician, hairdresser, etc, right away, but will have to arrange a date and time for some time in the future:

- I'm afraid that the dentist cannot see you right now. **You'll have to make an appointment.**
- None of the hairdressers could do your hair right away. **You'll have to make an appointment.**

### cancellation we've had a cancellation

You say **we've had a cancellation** when someone has made an appointment to see someone but has then changed their mind:



- **We've had a cancellation** this afternoon. Dr Jackson can see you at three o'clock.
- **We've just had a cancellation.** Our stylist, Julie, could cut your hair right away.

## fine

### that's fine

You say **that's fine** when you are agreeing to an appointment or meeting which someone has suggested:

- 'Mr Jones could give you an eye check-up next Friday at two o'clock.'
- **'That's fine.** I'll just write that down.'

## fit

### I could fit you in

You say **I could fit you in** when you are offering to find enough time to give someone an appointment, often even though you're very busy:

- My appointment diary is nearly full for next week, but **I could fit you in** on Monday at eleven o'clock.
- I am extremely busy next week, but **I could fit you in** for a dental check-up next Wednesday at four o'clock.

## free

### are you free?

You say **are you free?** when you are asking someone if it is possible for them to meet you at a suggested time or to accept a suggested appointment time:

- **Are you free** tomorrow evening? I could meet you at seven o'clock.
- Mr Jones could give you an eye check-up on Friday at three o'clock. **Are you free** then?

### I'm not free

You say **I'm not free** when you cannot meet someone at a suggested time or to accept a

suggested appointment time because you have arranged to do something else.

- 'Could we arrange to meet on Saturday morning at ten o'clock?'
- 'Sorry, **I'm not free** then, but I could meet you on Saturday afternoon.'

## good

### that's no good

You say **that's no good** when you cannot accept a suggested appointment or meet someone at a suggested time:

- 'I could give you an appointment with Dr Brown at three o'clock tomorrow afternoon.'
- 'Sorry, **that's no good.** I won't be able to get away from work at that time.'
- 'I could meet you tomorrow evening, if you like.'
- 'No, **that's no good.** I have to go to my music class.'

## manage

### I can't manage that

When you say **I can't manage that** you mean that you cannot accept a suggested appointment or meet someone at a suggested time:

- 'Could you meet me tomorrow afternoon?'
- 'Sorry, **I can't manage that,** I'm afraid. I'm playing tennis.'
- 'I could give you an appointment with Miss Wilson tomorrow morning at nine o'clock.'
- 'I **can't manage that,** I'm afraid. I have to take my children to nursery school.'

### Language Help

The expression **I can't make that** has the same meaning:

- 'I could meet you this evening at eight, if you like.'
- 'Sorry, **I can't make that.**'



## meeting

### set up a meeting

When you **set up a meeting** with someone you arrange to meet someone or some people to discuss something, usually at a reasonably formal level:

- *I've set up a meeting with the other members of the tennis club committee to discuss moving to new premises.*
- *Our major competitors are trying to set up a meeting with our board of directors. There's a rumour that they're interested in buying our firm.*

## OK

### if that's OK with you

You say **if that's OK with you** when you are suggesting a time for a meeting with someone and are asking in an informal way if the time is acceptable to them:

- *I'll call a meeting of the rest of the committee for next Tuesday evening, if that's OK with you.*
- *We could meet at the local pub tomorrow evening at eight o'clock, if that's OK with you.*

## see

### see you then!

You say **see you then!** as a kind of informal confirmation when you have made an appointment to see someone or have made an arrangement to meet someone:

- *'Your appointment is next Tuesday at three o'clock.'*  
*'Right. See you then!'*
- *'So we'll meet outside the cinema at six o'clock.'*  
*'OK! See you then!'*

## say

### shall we say?

You say **shall we say?** when you are suggesting a time for a meeting or an appointment:

- *I could meet you tomorrow. Shall we say six o'clock after work?*
- *Yes, I could give you an appointment with Mrs Brown next week. Shall we say Thursday at ten o'clock?*

## suit

### does that suit you?

You say **does that suit you?** when you are asking if the suggested time for an appointment or meeting is acceptable to someone:

- *I could give you an appointment with Dr Wilson tomorrow at ten thirty. Does that suit you?*
- *I'm free to meet you this evening at seven. Does that suit you?*

### ... would suit me better

You say that something **would suit you better** when you are suggesting a time for an appointment or meeting that is more acceptable or suitable to you than another one:

- *'I could meet you at seven tomorrow evening.'*  
*'Eight would suit me better, if that's all right with you.'*
- *'I can offer you an appointment with our stylist, Sara, at three o'clock this afternoon, if you like.'*  
*'Thank you, but three thirty would suit me better, if that's possible.'*

## urgent is it urgent?

You say **is it urgent?** when you want to know if it is very important that someone get an appointment very soon or if they can wait longer without any harm being done:

- 'I would like to make an appointment with the dentist.'  
'**Is it urgent** because the dentist is very busy this week?'
- 'I need to make an appointment to see one of the doctors.'  
'**Is it urgent?** If it's not, you're going to have to wait till tomorrow. The doctors are all very busy.'

## what what about?

You say **what about?** when you are suggesting a time for an appointment or meeting:

- '**What about** Thursday? Mr Jones could see you at four thirty.'  
'No, I'm sorry. I'm going to a conference on Thursday.'
- 'We'll have to meet soon to discuss the party arrangements. **What about** tomorrow evening?'

### Language Help

The expression **how about?** has the same meaning:

- 'I need to meet you to talk about the football fixtures for next season.'  
'**How about** Tuesday evening? I'm free then.'

## Exercise 30

Answer the following questions.

**A** What expression might you use

- 1 when you are offering to find time to give someone an appointment even though you are very busy?
- 2 when you want to know if it is extremely important that someone gets an appointment right away?
- 3 when you are telling someone that they have to make an arrangement to see someone professionally at a future time?
- 4 when you are asking if the suggested time for an appointment or meeting is acceptable to someone?

**B** What expression from the passage means the same as **I can't make that**?

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**C** What two expressions from the passage indicate that you are agreeing to an appointment or meeting which someone has suggested?

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**D** What expression would you use if you want to formally arrange a meeting with someone to discuss something?

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**E** Insert the word missing from each expression below.

- 1 *I could see you towards the end of next week. **Shall we** \_\_\_\_\_ Thursday at four o'clock?*
- 2 *I could meet you on Wednesday afternoon, but Thursday morning **would** \_\_\_\_\_ **me better**.*
- 3 *The only free appointment time that Mr Jones has next week is Friday at three o'clock. **Are you** \_\_\_\_\_ then?*
- 4 *We could meet early on Saturday morning **if that's** \_\_\_\_\_ **with you**.*



## Answers

### Exercise 1

- A** 1 May I speak to ...? (*Sentence subjective*)  
 2 Goodbye! (*Sentence subjective*)
- B** 1 help 2 put  
 3 message
- C** 1 I'll call back. 2 I'm sorry ...  
 3 Good afternoon!
- D** The line is busy.

### Exercise 2

- A** 1 go 2 break  
 3 must 4 long  
 5 late
- B** When it is late in the evening and you are leaving someone or leaving a social gathering.
- C** See you!; See you soon!; See you later!
- D** Cheerio!

### Exercise 3

- A** When you are introducing two people informally.
- B** My name is ...
- C** How do you do? (*Sentence subjective*)
- D** I'd like to introduce ...; May I introduce ...; Let me introduce ...; Allow me to introduce ...
- E** Nice to meet you ...; Good to meet you ... (*Sentence subjective*)
- F** 1 How 2 introduce  
 3 meet

### Exercise 4

- A** What's the matter?; What's up?
- B** When you are trying to persuade someone to be less worried or less anxious.
- C** concerned; anxious (*Sentence subjective*)
- D** They feel unhappy because something bad or unpleasant has happened.
- E** 1 Don't 2 something  
 3 right

### Exercise 5

- A** 1 for 2 to  
 3 about 4 need  
 5 problem 6 Excuse
- B** That's all right. (*Sentence subjective*)

- C** When you want someone to repeat what they have just said.

- D** When you mean to stop feeling angry with someone for having done something to hurt or upset you. (*Sentence subjective*)

### Exercise 6

- A** 1 many 2 make  
 3 it
- B** When they do not have something that the customer wants.
- C** 1 Next, please! 2 Anything else?
- D** That comes to ...; That'll be ...
- E** How much do I owe you?
- F** Give me ...
- G** What can I do for you?

### Exercise 7

- A** I'd like to try it on.
- B** Can I help you?
- C** 1 look 2 fit  
 3 stock
- D** 1 I'll take this one, please.  
 2 I take a size ...
- E** It's too expensive.
- F** How much is it?

### Exercise 8

- A** Many happy returns of the day!
- B** A good New Year!
- C** Merry Xmas!
- D** All the best!
- E** 1 happy 2 Christmas  
 3 wishes

### Exercise 9

- A** You're welcome!
- B** 1 lot 2 much  
 3 shouldn't 4 mention  
 5 pleasure
- C** When you thank someone informally for something.
- D** It was kind of you ...; It was good of you ...
- E** As a polite response to being thanked and as a response to an apology.

### Exercise 10

- A** Every good wish!  
**B** 1 wish                      2 hope  
       3 luck                     4 best  
**C** You would use it to two people who are about to get married.  
**D** The best of luck!  
**E** Here's to ...!

### Exercise 11

- A** How are you doing?  
**B** Morning!  
**C** Hi!  
**D** I'm OK.  
**E** You use it in reply to someone who has asked how you are.  
**F** And how are you?  
**G** As a conventional greeting when you meet someone.

### Exercise 12

- A** I intend to  
**B** I want  
**C** I fancy ...  
**D** 1 decision                2 wish  
**E** 1 I'm hoping to ...    2 I'm planning to ...

### Exercise 13

- A** 1 up                        2 down  
       3 make                4 but  
       5 like  
**B** invite  
**C** refuse an invitation; turn down an invitation  
       (Sentence subjective)  
**D** It's kind of you to ...; It's good of you to ...  
       (Sentence subjective)  
**E** When you have to refuse an invitation to something but want to show that you would like to be invited to something similar at a later date.

### Exercise 14

- A** Can I lend a hand?  
**B** Do you need any help?  
**C** Thanks for your help.  
**D** 1 useful                    2 assistance  
       3 with                   4 appreciate  
       5 anything

### Exercise 15

- A** May I? (Sentence subjective)  
**B** Would it be all right if I turned down the heating?  
**C** Be my guest!  
**D** 1 ahead                    2 feel  
       3 better  
**E** They don't let us ...

### Exercise 16

- A** It is a circular area where several roads meet and round which drivers drive in the same direction in order to find the road they want. Straight on.  
**B** The roads meet and cross each other.  
**D** When you are unfamiliar with a place and someone has asked you for directions.  
**E** take  
**F** 1 way                      2 directions  
       3 ask

### Exercise 17

- A** very cold  
**B** warm and wet  
**C** fine  
**D** How's the weather?; What's the weather like?  
**E** rainy; wet  
**F** unsettled  
**G** You might listen to the weather forecast on the radio or television.  
**H** pour

### Exercise 18

- A** an a la carte menu  
**B** book a table  
**C** Could we have the check, please?  
**D** 1 Here is the wine list.  
       2 I would like the sole and orange sauce.  
       3 Can I get you some water?  
**E** 1 else                      2 order  
       3 reservation

### Exercise 19

- A** What a shame.  
**B** I'm so sorry!  
**C** When someone or a pet they love has died.  
**D** 1 sympathy                2 sympathize  
       3 feel

### Exercise 20

- A** 1 How much is that? 2 I'd like  
**B** to go  
**C** Have a nice day!  
**D** Help yourself!  
**E** 1 leaving 2 enough  
 3 another 4 Anything

### Exercise 21

- A** Be careful! (*Sentence subjective*)  
**B** trespasser  
**C** Trespassers will be prosecuted!  
**D** Look out!; Watch out! (*Sentence subjective*)  
**E** 1 away 2 of  
 3 Don't 4 mustn't

### Exercise 22

- A** detest; loathe  
**B** prefer  
**C** 1 stand 2 mad  
 3 appeals 4 of  
 5 keen

### Exercise 23

- A** I propose that ...  
**B** 1 better 2 were  
 3 advised 4 word  
 5 piece  
**C** What about ...?; How about ...?  
**D** Take someone's advice

### Exercise 24

- A** I'm sure; I'm certain  
**B** undoubtedly (*Sentence subjective*)  
**C** maybe (*Sentence subjective*)  
**D** 1 knows 2 decision  
 3 no 4 up  
 5 doubtful

### Exercise 25

- A** A thermometer.  
**B** Hotter.  
**C** It is (a piece of paper on which a doctor writes details of) the medicine which it is hoped will help cure a person's illness.  
**D** They are very small forms of plant life which live in air, earth and water and also on living and dead animals, and can cause disease. Bacterial infection.  
**E** fluids

- F** have an allergy to something.  
**G** I have a sore throat.  
**H** 1 antibiotics 2 painkillers  
 3 cold

### Exercise 26

- A** 1 pleased 2 moon  
 3 news 4 for  
**B** It means that they are feeling very, very happy about something and acting in a very excited way.  
**C** They act in a very energetic, eager way.  
**D** overjoyed (*Sentence subjective*)  
**E** That's great!

### Exercise 27

- A** I'm with you there!  
**B** 1 I couldn't disagree with you more.  
 2 I agree with you up to a point.  
 3 I am in complete agreement with you.  
**C** 1 odds 2 view  
 3 issue 4 general  
**D** unanimous (*Sentence subjective*)

### Exercise 28

- A** 1 What is the time? 2 Half past two.  
 3 What's the date today?  
 4 Be on time.  
**B** a watch being slow  
**C** Quarter of five.  
**D** It's June the ninth.  
**E** My watch is right.

### Exercise 29

- A** 1 pay 2 receive  
 3 pass 4 suits  
**B** To show his admiration of her appearance.  
**C** You're making me blush!  
**D** appreciative  
**E** It's very kind of you to say so.

### Exercise 30

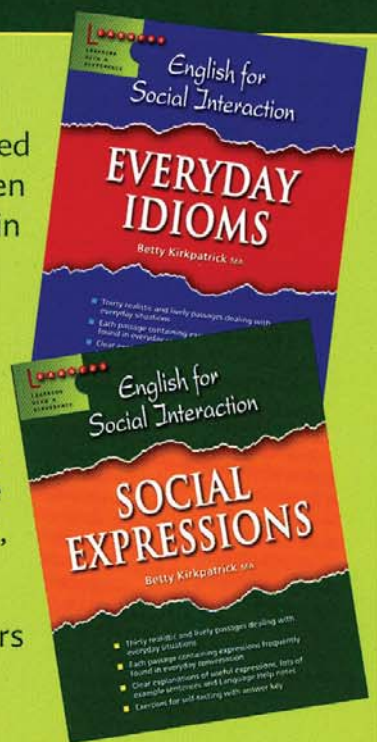
- A** 1 I could fit you in. 2 Is it urgent?  
 3 You'll have to make an appointment.  
 4 Does that suit you?  
**B** I can't manage that.  
**C** That's all right.; That's fine.  
**D** set up a meeting  
**E** 1 say 2 suit  
 3 free 4 OK



**English for Social Interaction** is intended to help foreign learners acquire spoken English skills so that they can engage in fluent communication.

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### About the Writer

A graduate of Edinburgh University, Betty Kirkpatrick has had a long and distinguished career as editor, publisher and writer of English reference books. She was the editor of the *Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary*, the editor of *Roget's Thesaurus* and the compiler of the *Oxford Paperback Thesaurus*. Her *Dictionary of Clichés*, published by Bloomsbury, is also available in a US edition and a Japanese edition.